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# THE RUSSIAN REVIEW



*An American Journal  
Devoted to Russia  
Past and Present*

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# THE RUSSIAN REVIEW

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# Russia's Role In The Postwar World

BY WILLIAM HENRY CHAMBERLIN

**T**HREE is one and perhaps only one prediction that can safely be made about Russia's part in the postwar world. It will be a bigger rôle than Russia has ever played on the international stage in the past. For the number of great powers is being steadily whittled down by the merciless attrition of a Second World War.

Much time must elapse before France can resume the position of dominance which it enjoyed in the counsels of Europe between the two wars. The Italian showing in the war indicates that it takes more than a black shirt to turn a Fascist into a Roman legionary. By a process of elimination the war in Europe has become a duel between the two strongest military machines, Hitler's and Stalin's.

Now, assuming the total defeat of Germany, its compulsory disarmament and its obliteration as a major power, Russia remains far and away the strongest of the continental powers. Idealists may dream of a time when all nations, great and small, will have equal rights and equal responsibilities. But the world that will emerge from the present slaughter will be bleak and hard-boiled. Power will be vested pretty definitely in the hands of the great powers that survive the present ordeal by combat. At the present moment it would seem that there will be three such powers, the United States the British Empire, and the Soviet Union.

Russia will gain automatically in strength by the defeat of Japan in the East, just as it will gain from the downfall of Germany in the West. For Germany and Japan were formerly the two most powerful checks on Russian possible expansion. With both these checks removed, the Soviet Union is certain to speak in a loud and compelling voice in regions well beyond the frontiers which it may possess at the end of hostilities. It will be extremely difficult, if not impossible to establish in Eastern Europe, in vast areas of Central Asia, in Manchuria, and other adjacent parts of China any settlement that is unsatisfactory to Russia.

The present war, in which Russia alone up to the present time has displayed the capacity to resist successfully the full shock of the formidable German *Wehrmacht* on land, has thrown into sharp

relief several features of the Soviet Union that mark it out as one of the major powers of the future, assuming a successful end of the present war. The Soviet Union, first of all, is the largest land mass under single sovereignty in the world. It is more than two and a half times the size of the continental United States. It is larger than the whole of South America.

The Soviet population, 170,000,000 in 1939, is also the largest under single sovereignty inhabiting what could reasonably be called an industrial state. China and India are more populous countries than Russia. But neither has made enough progress in the development of industry to rival Russia as a producer of the airplanes and tanks that are the ultimate sources of power in the iron age through which the world is now living.

The Soviet Union is not only a large country. It is also a rich country, not as rich in the proportion of natural resources to size and population as the United States, but well provided by nature to be the seat of a large-scale industrial civilization. Within the frontiers of the Soviet Union are, according to Soviet estimates, over half the world's reserves of oil, about one-fifth of the reserves of coal, more than a quarter of the reserves of water power, about one-third of the world's timber resources. Even if one allows for some patriotic exaggeration in these estimates, the Soviet Union certainly possesses ample reserves of almost all the important industrial minerals and raw materials (coal, iron, oil, manganese, nickel, copper, phosphates, cotton, wool, etc.) to sustain from its own resources a program of large industrial development, comparable with what America experienced after the Civil War.

The remarkable resilience of the Russian offensive last winter proves that the Soviet Union possesses a tremendously strong natural defensive position, just because of its enormous size. One should not for a moment underestimate the terrific gashes and wounds that have been inflicted on the body of Russia's manpower and economic resources by hostile overrunning of hundreds of thousands of square miles of territory and especially by the occupation of the rich Ukraine. But the new industrial centers in the East proved their strategic value by making possible a steady flow of munitions.

If Russia emerges victorious from the supreme test of German invasion it will have proved itself virtually impregnable. No country in the world except the United States possesses a defensive position so well shielded even against airplane attack.

So the question of what Russia will do with its share of the United Nations victory looms larger and larger in public interest all over

the world. Amid the chorus of official congratulations on the striking successes of the Red Army in January and February two unofficial but audible notes of doubt were struck. The Soviet dictator, Joseph Stalin, possesses a grim and sardonic sense of humor and he is probably amused at the contrasted fears which have been expressed to the effect that he will not go far enough or that he will go too far.

More specifically, it is suggested in some quarters that Stalin may conclude a separate peace with Germany when the German troops are driven from Soviet territory. Apprehension is also felt that Stalin, far from stopping at his frontier, will sweep over Europe, bringing communism to the European peoples on the bayonets of the Red Army.

Obviously both these apprehensions will scarcely be realized, since they are contradictory. Yet there is evidence that could support either of these fears about these possible turns in Stalin's foreign policy, once he regains freedom of action by clearing his land of invaders. It can be taken for granted that the upsurge of national feeling in Russia makes impossible a conclusion of a peace of surrender, based on the cession to Germany of large and rich districts such as the Ukraine and the Caucasus.

Stalin's international policy before and after the outbreak of the European war was one of hard-boiled nationalism. It might be described as a "Russia First" policy. Its most striking expression was the conclusion of the pact with Hitler, a pact which made the outbreak of war practically inevitable. The Soviet dictator has always shown himself very unresponsive to the idea of serving the interests of some foreign power.

A book that is interesting not only for its historical material, but also for the light which it throws on the psychology of Soviet foreign policy in modern times is the Soviet Professor Eugene Tarlé's *Napoleon's Invasion of Russia—1812*, published in Russia before the outbreak of the Second World War and made available to American readers in an English translation last year. Tarlé, who, like many other Russian scholars, suffered the experience of imprisonment and exile in the early thirties, but who was subsequently released and reinstated in official favor, is sharply critical of Tsar Alexander I for his decision to pursue Napoleon's shattered army beyond the Russian frontier and to send Russian armies to the battle-fields of Europe.

The Soviet professor praises General Kutuzov, popular hero of the campaign, who believed that Russia's objectives had been realized when Napoleon's army had been virtually annihilated and,

according to Tarlé, foresaw that the carrying of the war into Western Europe would work only to the advantage of England. Under Soviet conditions of censorship and thought control such a book would scarcely have been written or published if its historical viewpoint had not coincided with the spirit of Soviet foreign policy, which Stalin has repeatedly defined in recent years as aiming primarily at serving Russia's national interests.

So one cannot rule out with absolute certainty the possibility that Stalin might call off the war, or at least reduce very appreciably his participation in it after the Germans and their satellite troops have been expelled from the Soviet Union. On the other hand, wholesale destruction, pillage, and devastation wrought by the invaders have left bitter memories; the young generals of the Red Army who led the successful offensive of the past winter are presumably anxious to win new laurels on foreign soil, and Stalin could scarcely overlook the danger that an unbeaten Germany might fight the Western powers to a standstill and return to the attack on Russia.

As for the other apprehension, that a consequence of the war may be the submergence of all or many European states in a flood of communism, this cannot be either asserted or denied at the present time. Much depends on such unpredictable and unknowable facts as what mood will prevail in Germany itself and in the countries which are liberated from German occupation after the crack-up of the Nazi military power.

Soviet history is full of examples of the technique of spreading communism with the aid of armed force. This was how Georgia and some other non-Russian parts of the Soviet Union were brought under Soviet rule. Poland and the Baltic Republics were invaded by the Red Army during the period of the Civil War with the idea of helping local Communists set up Soviet régimes. A Soviet Quisling named Kuusinen was nominated to head what was designed as a puppet régime in Finland at the time of the Soviet-Finnish War of 1939-1940, although this project was dropped when the strength and unity of the Finnish resistance became apparent.

So there is nothing in the historical record of the Soviet régime to exclude the possibility of revolutionary imperialism after the present war. It is true that the doctrinaire fanaticism with which Lenin and his associates looked forward to the coming of world revolution has evaporated in Stalin's Russia. But while the idea of promoting communism for its own sake is dead, or at least moribund, the idea of using Communist parties in other countries to further Russian expansionist ambitions is not necessarily foreign to

the psychology of Russia at the present time.

Stalin has already made it emphatically clear that he regards his frontier of 1941 as an indisputable minimum claim in Europe. This means that the formerly independent little Baltic states, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia, the eastern provinces of Poland, Bessarabia, Northern Bukovina, and parts of Finland would be incorporated into the Soviet Union.

Cautious rather than adventurous in his approach to foreign affairs Stalin may conceivably be satisfied with this territorial settlement. He might even shrink from the immense difficulties which would be involved in annexing additional regions of central and southeastern Europe at a time when these regions will be in the most extreme state of distress and impoverishment and when Russia itself will have a thousand urgent problems of internal reconstruction.

Yet a Soviet disposition to intervene in the politics of countries which lie outside the frontier which Stalin has claimed is reflected both in the Russian support of the anti-Mikhailovich, so-called partisan movement in Yugoslavia and in the recent charge by General Sikorsky, head of the Polish Government-in-exile, that Soviet parachutists have descended in Poland not for military activity, but for the purpose of organizing local Communist cells. One thing that Stalin will certainly not tolerate is any political combination among his Western neighbors. Soviet diplomacy has already been actively engaged in separating the Czechs from the Poles. To Czechoslovakia the Soviet Government is willing to assure its pre-war frontier, while it maintains its claim to the Polish eastern provinces. And Soviet influence has apparently helped to wreck the project of federation between Poland and Czechoslovakia.

Russia is a great power in the Far East, as in Europe. The non-aggression pact which Stalin concluded with Japan in April, 1941, was not unlike the similar pact with Hitler as regards objective, although it has worked out more successfully. The pact with Hitler only delayed the German attack on the Soviet Union. The pact with Japan has forestalled the much predicted Russo-Japanese war up to the present time. It can be regarded as axiomatic that Stalin will not attack Japan and will not allow his territory to be used as a base for an attack on Japan until Germany is disposed of. And it seems increasingly doubtful whether Japan, already hard pressed in the South Pacific, will let itself in for a hard campaign in Siberia which would demand a further heavy depletion of Japan's manpower and of its limited reserves in aircraft.

Will Stalin help England and America against Japan after Hitler

has been defeated? The answer to this question is necessarily speculative. But the wily Soviet dictator is not a man who does nothing for nothing. He has repeatedly expressed discontent with the scope and speed of American and British military co-operation, so that gratitude is not likely to influence his disposition, even if such a consideration entered largely into Stalin's calculations.

So it seems probable that the Soviet Union will preserve neutrality in the Anglo-American war with Japan for a time, striking at a moment when Japan is already seriously weakened, and Stalin can count on realizing the maximum advantage from the minimum effort. There will be a price for this intervention. Stalin's minimum ambition would be to restore in Manchuria the situation that prevailed before the Japanese conquest, when Russia enjoyed extensive rights in the zone of the Chinese Eastern Railway that bisects Northern Manchuria and provides the shortest means of communication to Vladivostok. And it is by no means impossible that, if Russian troops should play the main part in driving the Japanese out of Manchuria, Stalin would wish to annex this rich land, which projects like a wedge into Siberia. Its acquisition would neatly round out the Russian frontier in the Far East. Of course no such ugly word as annexation would be used. There would be a carefully staged "spontaneous" demand of the Manchurian "workers and peasants" for the creation of a Soviet Republic and for inclusion in the Soviet Union. Lip-service would be paid to self-determination and to the Atlantic Charter.

Perhaps the decisive touchstone of Stalin's postwar policy will be his willingness, or unwillingness, to liquidate Russia's affiliation with the Communist International. Even in the course of a war in which Russia is an ally the existence in England and America of "fifth columns," in the shape of Communist parties, obligated to obey any order from Moscow, is occasionally an embarrassment. After the end of the war it may become an intolerable source of irritation and friction.

Efforts to draw a line of distinction between the Communist Party and the Soviet Government and to repudiate any responsibility of the latter for the policies of the International represent nothing but meaningless hairsplitting, in view of the highly centralized totalitarian character of the Soviet state. Any order of Stalin is just as binding for the International, i. e. for those citizens of foreign states who are organized in Communist parties, as it is for internal Soviet affairs.

If it were merely a matter of doctrinaire Communist fanaticism,

Stalin would probably be quite willing to dissociate Russia from the International. But these Communist parties in other countries are a useful weapon, and Stalin hesitates to let go of a weapon.

So it would be idle to deny that there are many difficulties and complications in the way of a complete working understanding between the Soviet Union and the Western powers. There have been sharp differences of opinion about the conduct of the war. There is no evidence that there has been a full understanding about the questions of Russia's future boundaries in Europe and in Asia and about the problem of Russian-sponsored Communist propaganda.

On the other hand the heroic resistance of the Russian people has created the most favorable background of public opinion that the Soviet Union has enjoyed since the Revolution. If Soviet official assertions of intentions to respect the independence of other peoples are realized in practice, if the Soviet Union seeks only to develop its own social and economic system in an atmosphere of world security it can certainly count on the sympathy and understanding of the overwhelming majority of the people in the other Allied countries. This sympathy and understanding will be further promoted if the harsher and more brutal features of the dictatorship are liquidated after the disappearance of external threats to Soviet security.

Tsars are again in fashion in Russia. Peter the Great and Ivan the Terrible have been singled out for discriminating praise. There is another Tsar whom Stalin might profitably take as a model in his postwar attitude. This is Alexander I. If Stalin displays as much moderation after the downfall of Hitler as Alexander I showed after the fall of Napoleon, Russia will further enhance the prestige that has been won by the achievements of the Red Army and the self-sacrificing devotion of the Russian people.

# Berdyae: Sibyl In Waste Land

BY MONROE C. BEARDSLEY

*Hora novissima,  
Tempora pessima  
Sunt.*

Bernard de Morlaix

**A**T CERTAIN epochs the more or less continuous flow of history seems to be interrupted, and for short periods men stand in a kind of disturbing vacuum between the currents of the past that are receding too swiftly and the currents of the future that have not yet gathered substance. In such periods, which are marked by sharp contrasts in what Whitehead has called the "climate of opinion," men, in their uneasiness and restlessness, are forced to take stock of themselves and their world. They ask, with an insistence unnecessary at other times, where they are going, and how, and why. In such periods, too, there appear philosophers who try to stand aside from the turmoil, to gain a wider perspective, in order to discover in a thorough inventory of their age the answers to these troubling questions and the grounds of a prophetic judgment. Few men have the vision to pull together in their thought the tenuous and complicated strands of meaning that run through the world, and, as is well known, fewer still are thanked for their labor. But often they have much to say, if not to their preoccupied contemporaries, at least to a more attentive, because less distracted, posterity.

Today there is a widespread feeling, not only among a few isolated thinkers, that the twentieth century marks some sort of fundamental boundary in man's history. And whether this seemingly cataclysmic character of our age is apparent or real is the riddle which many contemporary philosophers of history have set themselves to read. They have tried to interpret the signs of the times, not (as in past ages men have done) by consulting the Babylonian numbers, the *sortes Virgilianae*, or the hallowed entrails, but by turning back to the broad study of man's entire past, in order to discern in the course of universal history the meaning of our own segment of it.

Thus, Toynbee believes that all cultures pass through growth and disintegration in a regular rhythm of three-and-a-half beats; he has tentatively suggested that we are now at that point in every culture

when the "time of troubles" is ending and the "universal state" is about to be achieved, the latter representing the last successful adjustment of every culture before it passes into oblivion. Sorokin believes that history consists in an alternating succession of "sensate," "ideational," and "idealistic" cultural periods; and that our age is in the process of transition out of the latest "sensate" wave. Spengler believes that history is a gaudy and gloomy procession of doomed cultures, each with a fixed duration, pattern, and scope; and that we are now entering on the violent death-rattle of the Western "Faustian" soul, which must stagger through a period of "Caesarism" before it is solidified into a spiritless "Byzantine" husk. Croce believes that history is the story of man's alternately successful and unsuccessful striving to preserve and enlarge his liberty; and that our age is one in which liberty has been set back temporarily, because it had been taken too much for granted, and can only be re-invigorated through tribulation. Ortega y Gasset believes that history is a series of revelations of truths that serve man for a while and then decay; and that our age is one which has lost the narrow faith in reason that buoyed up the modern world, and which stands in need of a "new revelation" that a study of history itself will give. Drucker believes that we are witnessing the liquidation of "economic man," and Ferrero, who has brooded long over the death of civilizations, believes that we are mortally ill because we have failed to make power subordinate to justice.

Some of these men have much to teach; some, little. But in all their disagreements we can perceive a common endeavor. In this company belongs Nicholas Berdyaev, who has dedicated most of his life and work to the same endeavor, though in spirit he stands apart from all the others. Indeed, Berdyaev's real affinity is not any of his contemporary philosophers of history, but St. Augustine. For Berdyaev believes himself to be the herald of the fall of a humanistic civilization, as Augustine heralded the fall of a pagan one. New barbarians, he points out, are abroad today. Berdyaev's diagnosis of the spiritual diseases of Western man has the ring of Augustine's diagnosis of the Roman. Berdyaev believes that he stands on the threshold of a "new middle ages," as Augustine stood. And Berdyaev has attacked the "heresies" of racialism and collectivism as Augustine attacked the Pelagians and Gnostics. The parallel must not be pushed too far, for their personalities and lives diverge in many ways; but it is helpful to an understanding of Berdyaev to realize that in their uncompromising faith in divine providence, in the dogmatic vigor of their castigations, and in their plea for a moral, rather

than an institutional, revolution of man, these two philosophers are alike.

Berdyaev's philosophy of history, most fully developed in *The Meaning of History*, is a curious blend. Its basic framework is the Augustinian view that history is to be understood against the background of eternity, that the ultimate significance of man's worldly destiny lies in the fact that in his immortality he transcends all time. In this Christian view every event in history is unique and unrepeatable, because history is divided into two parts by an event which is utterly unique: the life of Christ. The dynamic element in history is freedom of will, which gives man a certain independence of both natural necessity and divine will. But Berdyaev superimposes upon this linear conception of history the cyclical view of Meyer, Spengler, and others. That is, he holds that cultures have their patterns of growth and decay, which are repeated in outline. It is this view that makes untenable any simple theory of linear progress, and which sets inevitable limits for all of man's creative endeavors.

Hence Berdyaev tells us over and over again that history, viewed from within the process itself, is tragedy. What gives man his illusory hope for a better earth is his unquenchable will to free his creative spirit from the natural forces, inside and outside himself, that try to drag him down. What makes him despair is the rigid dialectic of history, by which every human work is "riddled with contradictions and carries the seeds of its own destruction," so that it passes inevitably into its opposite. It is this dualistic Hegelianism that underlies Berdyaev's view that man's history is unbearable if that is the whole story—that the tragedy can only be borne if it is seen, not from within alone, but from beyond, in the perspective of an eternity in which all contradictions are resolved.

It is, however, the modern period—to the whole of which he extends the name "Renaissance"—which chiefly preoccupies Berdyaev. The dawn of modern history broke when Western man shook himself free of his medieval inhibitions and of his fear of nature, and, with a sense of power and self-sufficiency new in the history of the world, set forth on a great adventure. Within a few centuries, in a terrific burst of creativity, he laid down the lines of growth, and determined the general character, of a new civilization, every part of which was to be permeated with man's new-found independence, freedom, and self-reliance. Men became individuals, and in the name of individualism carried through the long struggle for liberal democracy, founded on the inalienable rights of man, not as a member of a group, but as a particular atomic entity. Art and

literature discovered a new world in the individual human form, in the individual life. The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries achieved an age of "enlightenment," filled with a proud and illimitable faith in the power of individual reason to know the nature of ultimate reality, to read all the riddles of nature by science, to make and manage a society in which the individual would reign supreme while clear thinking disposed of every conflict.

These fundamental tendencies—individualism, liberalism, naturalism, and rationalism—Berdyaev sums up in the term "Humanism." The keynote of modern history, he believes, is Humanism—the doctrine that man is lord of creation, is sufficient unto himself, needs no master but his own mind. Humanism is (in Dostoevsky's terms) the setting up of the "Man-God" instead of the Christian "God-Man." But the drive of man to become self-sufficient, to get along without divine aid, necessarily became canalized in two different directions: control of nature, and ordering of society. And, according to Berdyaev's dialectical principle, the two instruments man devised to solve these problems inevitably turned against him. For man put all his faith in capitalism and technology. "Man," says Berdyaev in *The Meaning of History*, "attempted to master the natural elements by means of machinery and the development of his material productive forces, but in the process he has become the slave of both the machine and the social environment of his creation." How did this come about?

As Berdyaev traces the development (most explicitly in *The Fate of Man in the Modern World*), the humanistic philosophy evolved a hedonistic theory of value, according to which the material resources of the world were to be exploited to the full for man's short-term enjoyment. Men rushed about like children in a toy shop, madly exhausting mines, spoiling the soil, uprooting trees, to make every material thing serve its function as an instrument to appetite. But when this commodity-idea took hold, and became generalized, labor itself became a commodity, and then gradually, through a capitalism which originally postulated the supreme value of man, man came to be considered to have no intrinsic value of any sort, save as he functions as producer of economic goods in a society whose only standard of worth is profit. All social theory ultimately becomes economic theory, and economic theory sets no limits to man's instrumentalization of his fellows. Furthermore, to the material insecurity that followed from the domination of the competitive principle, was added a terrible spiritual loneliness, when the sense of brotherhood was gradually replaced by the impersonal

"cash-payment nexus."

This aspect of Humanism, Berdyaev calls "Economism," which in general means over-emphasis on economics, but in particular denotes the theory, which Berdyaev traces to capitalism, that "spirit is an epiphenomenon of economics." This means that it is the "practical" world of supply and demand, of credit and exchange, which is the real force in society and history; it means that economic laws are changeless, and that, however he may grow, man must continue to be cut to the measure of a Procrustean couch he himself once fashioned for his rest and comfort. In short, says Berdyaev, Marxist materialism is the underlying philosophy of capitalism, which most critics of capitalism have themselves swallowed. In his *Origin of Russian Communism*, and in *Christianity and Class War*, Berdyaev argues his thesis that capitalism was dialectically metamorphosed into collectivism (in the various forms of communism, socialism, fascism), because their atomic separation and their desperate needs drove men relentlessly into cooperation and revolution at any price. But collectivism, which Berdyaev regards as a phenomenon of high significance, means the end of humanism. For it is a sign that man has lost confidence in himself, that he has lost all intrinsic value in his own eyes. And in the "faceless" mass, class, or race, individualism is dead.

In a parallel fashion Berdyaev traces the fatal dialectic of the machine. Some of the points that follow are only hinted at in Berdyaev's essay, "Man and Machine" (published in *The Bourgeois Mind*), and in Chapter VI of *The Meaning of History*; I have expanded Berdyaev's insights with material from Lewis Mumford's brilliant and more concrete analysis in *Technics and Civilization*. It is, however, much to Berdyaev's credit that he has been more aware than most of his contemporaries of the enormous significance of technology.

The machine was introduced and developed as an instrument of man's spirit, reaching out to extend his dominion. It testified to the powers of the spirit that produced it. But as it grew in importance and in immensity, man himself began to find that it was less a tool for manipulating the environment than a part of the environment itself, less a means of adaptation than a fact to be adapted to. Together, the machine and capitalism turned against their maker—profit demanded that the machines keep running, and continually multiply in number, keeping pace with capitalization for increasing revenue, no matter what the human cost. Besides Economism there arose what we might analogously call "Technicism": the conception

that man is himself a part of the machine that is supposed to serve him, that man exists to fill in those motions in the production process which have not yet been assumed by machinery.

Technicism is at once a product of Humanism, Berdyaev says, and a symptom of its end. The ideal of freedom gives way to the mechanization of man's movements and life in conformity to mass-production, and to the dissolution of the whole personality into one-sided functions in the "division of labor." The creative spirit gives way to the standardization of objects, tastes, and responses, the routinization of life, the suppression of individual originality and joy in work, the blasting of man's emotional life. Even the early Renaissance love of natural beauty gives way to the acceptance of an unnatural city environment that is smoky, unclean, sunless, airless, colorless, dead. Thus, says Berdyaev, more than anything else the machine has killed the Renaissance and blown up the humanist illusion.

This, then, is man's earth today, as Berdyaev sketches its bitter outlines in *The End of Our Time* and *The Fate of Man in the Modern World*. In the events of our time we are witnessing the "end of the Renaissance," the dismantling of humanistic civilization. Everywhere he looks, Berdyaev finds the odorous and unpretty evidence of decay. What Berdyaev calls "Futurist" (by which he means abstract, dadaist, cubist, vorticist) art has annihilated the humanistic image of man by disintegrating it into geometric shapes, scraps of paper, musical instruments, furniture, and window-sills. There is widespread disenchantment, he says, not only with the liberal ideals of the French Revolution and with the institutions of parliamentary democracy, but with the very idea of the nationalistic state itself. Finally, there is the shock of more and more violent war and revolution, sweeping away the last scattered fragments of Humanism. The creative powers and inner potentialities of the Renaissance, Berdyaev says over and over again, are "played out," "exhausted," "used up," "bankrupt."

This is Berdyaev's wholesale rejection of modern history, and his grave indictment of his time. "Humanistic atheism leads to humanistic self-repudiation or anti-humanism." The dialectic of humanism, as Berdyaev traces it, is summed up by Lisaveta Prokofievna, in Dostoevsky's *Idiot*, in her words to the "lunatics" who aspire to love each other without loving God: "You are so eaten up with pride and vanity that you'll end by eating up one another, that's what I prophesy."

What, then, of the future? We stand, says Berdyaev, in Chapter

II of *The End of Our Time*, and elsewhere, on the threshold of a new era in history. He calls it the "New Middle Ages," not because it will be a facsimile of the old Middle Ages, but because it will, he prophesies, have a deep historical affinity to the old. The sense of falling shadows and gathering dusk pervades the pages of Berdyaev; he speaks often of the coming age as a "nocturnal epoch." It does not mean the end of culture, but it does mean the end of Humanism. It will be a period, he declares, when men will once more embrace Christianity, when they will strive for a new sense of brotherhood and organic unity with each other, when they will create a new motive for labor, "a motive which corresponds more with the value of a man," and, finally, when they will find in religious asceticism, and in the rigors of "a new civilized barbarism," discipline, and the inspiration for new cultural achievement.

Such is only the outline of a curiously-shaped horizon which Berdyaev believes he has seen through battle-smoke and factory-smudge. But he has not spoken about this now for some time, and we do not know whether he has formed a clearer image of the future, and whether, if he has, its color has grown darker with the days.

Berdyaev is a sensitive and reflective man, to whom the moral and cultural conflicts that shake our world have not appeared merely as subjects for record or reproach. One feels in every page that he has been cut to the heart. It is not Spengler's rancid hatred of mankind or Sorokin's Olympian preoccupation with statistics, but a Christian pity and an ache, that have made him a herald of apocalypse. The world he looks on is to him a Waste Land, marked by

"A heap of broken images, where the sun beats,  
And the dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket no  
relief,  
And the dry stone no sound of water."

It is a moral wilderness, in which so much of man's best is squandered on endeavors that are futile in their lack of integration of organic purpose, of lasting worth. Such is Berdyaev's "Blick ins Chaos." He is not anxious primarily to remedy manifest injustice or to revitalize culture, but to cry out against the humanization of the world and the (to him, consequent) dehumanization of man. And he believes that man possesses sufficient freedom, if he will use it, to spread new life from the few green places which still remain in the desert.

Berdyaev has followed no single master, and he has formed no fanatical school, though his thought is permeated with the general philosophical tradition of the Slavophils and Dostoevsky. His philosophy is thoroughly eclectic—he owes much to Marx, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Spengler, Léon Bloy, and the Russian thinkers and critics of the nineteenth century. But the mixture is his own. It is characteristic of him that in his youth he defended an unorthodox Marxism (in *Subjectivism and Individualism in Social Philosophy*), and later, in gratitude to his teacher, dedicated to him one of his most thorough attacks on Marxism, *Christianity and Class War*. Amid circumstances which demanded that one take sides without qualification or question, Berdyaev held aloof from parties and powers, and maintained a cantankerous independence, trying to see clearly what was right and what was wrong on either hand. Thus, characteristically, he was exiled by Tsarist Russia for criticizing the established order, and he was later ostracized by Soviet Russia for continuing to speak his religious faith. This withdrawn, bystander-like position of Berdyaev in the political currents of our time has given him a perspective that has, on the one hand, been a source of insight, but has, on the other hand, lent to his thought a certain remoteness from reality. To this remoteness, combined with an excessive readiness for generalization, and over-simplification, must be laid certain ideas which, in my opinion, constitute errors of judgment. I shall mention a few.

Having had no real experience in the practice of liberalism, Berdyaev quite misunderstands democracy when he says that it consists in the assertions that people have a right to falsehood and that truth is what the majority declares it to be. He is afraid and insecure because there are so many conflicting opinions everywhere today, and hence does not see that what democracy asserts is just that there is no better way known to discover and retain the truth than to allow people whose views are "false" from the currently conventional point of view, to attack orthodoxy. Further, Berdyaev writes sometimes as though he has a blind horror of machinery, so strong that he can see in it only evil; but his criticisms of the machine hold only for what Geddes and Mumford have called "paleotechnics." Berdyaev does not understand the recent developments in technics itself which have made it quite possible to separate the values of technical power from the incidental evils which have certainly accompanied it so far.

But most noteworthy of all, to my mind, is Berdyaev's attitude toward rationalism. His position is equivocal, for he suggests that

the sometimes excessive modern faith in reason was bad because it led to disillusionment and anti-rationalist revolt; and yet his whole work is founded on a firm rejection of rationalism in any form. It is here that Berdyaev unknowingly fits in most completely with a powerful and dangerous current of our age, variously eddying in the works of Bergson, Freud, Spengler, Pareto, the neo-Thomists, of the "sociologists of knowledge." But this attempt to escape the canons of logic and dispense with the intellect is precisely what renders futile all endeavor to understand and predict. For if Berdyaev's judgments are true ones, they can be certified as such, not by unquestionable intuitions or dogmatic assertions, not by fancy or by desire, but only by reason itself, testing and ratifying the proofs. There is something hectic and distraught about Berdyaev's description of our day, and one can discern in his attempt to "see life steadily and see it whole" signs of that "new failure of nerve" (as Sidney Hook has called it in a recent issue of the *Partisan Review*) which afflicts the acolytes of the New Irrationalism.

It has not been my purpose here to attempt a complete evaluation of Berdyaev's philosophy, or to examine in detail his attack on Humanism. I want chiefly to give some impression of the scope of his views, and to call attention to those of his insights which must be considered, for acceptance or rejection, by anyone who hopes to understand our age. What Berdyaev has contributed, above all, to this problem, is an emphasis on the moral and spiritual depths of our crisis. He has dug beneath institutions and works. He asks what we must think of man himself, and how far we must remake ourselves from within. Whether one ends by accepting Berdyaev's conviction that Humanism is dead, or by believing that its highest potentialities have not yet been realized, the thrust of Berdyaev's questions cannot be turned aside.

# America and Americans In Soviet Literature

BY VERA ALEXANDROVA

AMERICANS who have visited Russia, and Russians who have lived for some time in America, agree that both countries, although separated from each other geographically and different in their past and present, have something in common. This something is not easily definable, and might perhaps be called "spiritual atmosphere." For it is undeniable that people of both countries feel a mutual attraction towards each other. It is to be noted at once that this feeling originated and developed quite independently of any propaganda, and for this reason was not influenced by fluctuations in the official relations between the two countries.

For the Russian masses, especially for the peasants and the poorer townsfolk of the vast border regions of Russia, America was always a legendary land where everyone might achieve success through his own efforts.

The October Revolution, through the words of its first poets and writers, wittingly or unwittingly, strove to destroy this impression. America, in their representation, was the stronghold of capitalism and imperialism in which democracy served only as a screen for the unprincipled exploitation of the poor. America became a popular topic for rude revolutionary satire. Thus in the poem *150 Millions* the well-known poet-futurist Vladimir Mayakovsky, depicted the single-handed combat between the "gilded," "rolling in fat" Woodrow Wilson and the hungry and tattered Ivan, behind whom stood a hundred and fifty million people, thirsting for a new life. Ivan emerges the victor.

After Mayakovsky's visit to the United States in 1928, the view taken by him of America became somewhat broader. He was impressed most of all by the "great and true pathos of building." "The Americans build as though they were performing for the thousandth time a most interesting and perfectly rehearsed play. To tear oneself away from this spectacle of skill and cleverness is impossible." But the growth of specialized technique leads the poet to a new thought: the problem of revolutionary art must consist not in singing the praises of technique, as had been the fashion during the first years after the October Revolution, but "*in controlling technique in*

*the interests of mankind.*" American technique also overwhelmed the gifted peasant poet Sergei Esenin.

Boris Pilnyak's book *O. K.*, about America and the Americans, is written along the primitive lines of the communist scheme: "America was built by hands that were far from clean, and never in white gloves. . . There is a cruel rule that the living forget the dead, and the dead cannot tell about themselves and their doings because they are dead." Pilnyak apparently was toying with the idea of sketching a picture of American life from the point of view of the victims. The vividly presented incidents, however, often given at second hand, do not inspire trust in the reader.

The *One-Story America* by Ilf and Petrov differs favorably from Pilnyak's book. Although it likewise contains a number of superficial observations, it is free from the arrogant snobbishness of the radical tendency that strikes one so unpleasantly in Pilnyak's book. The *One-Story America* consists of the impressions of two Soviet men during a trip made by them in a comfortable automobile throughout the United States. They come to America with strict instructions not to show undue amazement and not to praise too much. They strive diligently to obey these instructions, but nevertheless much that they see truly amazes them and calls forth their admiration. One observation they make is especially noteworthy: "There is one phenomenon in American life which ought to interest us no less than a new detail of some machine. It is the *democracy in the relationship between people*. . . The outward forms of this democracy are magnificent. They are of great help in work, they deal a blow to bureaucracy and they raise the dignity of the people." The same observation was made also by many engineers and technicians who were sent here by the Soviet Government in the early thirties to perfect their knowledge.

"When shall we have such roads, factories, buildings?" sighed one such young engineer, Shilov, portrayed by Yakov Ilyin in his novel *The Great Conveyor*. Shilov is no exception. Examining the industrial novels of the thirties, one notices that they are all marked by a different attitude towards America than that which was so fashionable in the first years after the October Revolution. In the same novel by Ilyin, the engineer Bobrovnikov returns from America to his work in Stalingrad with a deep respect for American technique and for the organization of production in this country. He and a whole group of young engineers who had also studied in the United States consistently supported the suggestions of American specialists at the Stalingrad factory in which they worked.

The poets and writers of the first years of the October Revolution strove in vain to destroy the idyllic conception of America which lived in the minds of the people. In Zarubin's novel, *Hills* there is a little scene which sheds a bright light on the persistency of this conception: the Communist Ivan Bezuglyi, during a business trip to the Altai, meets an old acquaintance, the peasant Agapov. During the Civil War this Agapov had saved his life. Now Agapov has fled to the Altai from his native village in the Kursk region to escape collectivization. With no means, and beginning again from scratch, he has succeeded through hard work and with the help of his native shrewdness to build up a small but well-run establishment, and even kept bees. Bezuglyi praises Agapov, but this praise serves only to irritate anew the peasant's unhealed wound. He tells Bezuglyi with bitterness that were he, Agapov, living in America it would not be such a farm that he would have—he would long ago have been a real "farmer" and owned an automobile. And then this dreamer of America bursts forth into a bitter invective against the peasant policy of the Communists. "Vanya," he says, "why do you bind Russia's feet? You know that a hundred and sixty millions are sitting with their arms folded. . ." Agapov believes that it is high time to proclaim from the rostrum of the party congress: "Enough, comrades, of playing hide and seek with the peasant. The time has come to let him grow roots in the soil. . .".

Before the thirties Americans in Soviet literature appeared only rarely and incidentally. The first American to be presented in this literature is found in Vsevolod Ivanov's *Armoured Train 14-69*, published in 1922. This is an American soldier who has somehow got lost in Siberia in the very midst of the Civil War. He is captured by a band of peasant guerillas, is brought to headquarters, and is in danger of being shot as a suspected spy. To all the questions put to him by the guerilla Vaska Okorok, he can only answer "Comrade, I don't understand." "What ignorance," grieves Vaska, "the man does not understand Russian." A peasant woman who happens to be present when the American is captured, pities him and suggests that before shooting him it might be well to find out what sort of man he is. The examination in "political grammar" is carried out with the aid of a religious text-book which happens to be handy. Pointing to a picture representing Abraham sacrificing Isaac, Vaska tells the American that Abraham is a bourgeois and Isaac is the proletarian whom the bourgeois wants to kill. At the word "proletarian" the American joyfully nods his head. The guerillas decided that the "Merican" was a lad of their own kind and let him go in peace. . .

American enthusiasts of the type of John Reed, author of the book *Ten Days That Shook the World*, and American Communists and tourists who visited Soviet Russia in the first years of the Revolution left very little mark in Soviet literature. The situation changed noticeably, however, with the beginning of industrialization towards the end of the twenties.

The inauguration of the Five Year Plan required a great number of specialists, of whom there were very few in Russia, and the Soviet Government turned for help to foreigners, chiefly to Germans and Americans. The foreign specialists who were willing to go to work in Soviet Russia were insured good living conditions and were often paid in foreign currency. This second arrival of foreigners was reflected quite widely in imaginative literature. Significantly, the German engineers in the representation of Soviet writers were always cartoon-like figures, serving only as illustrations of the thesis, fashionable at the time, that capitalism was bankrupt. They all gladly consented to go to work in Russia because at home they suffered from unemployment and had no prospects for the future. The Americans are pictured quite differently.

Even the American tourists, who went to Soviet Russia in the thirties, went not in search of "revolution" as did their predecessors, but in order to see with their own eyes "the experiment in progress." Such a tourist is the rich American Ray Roop in Valentin Kataev's novel—*Time Forward*. Ray Roop is an independent, cultured man, who even has some knowledge of Russian literature. In a conversation, he astonishes his listener by saying that in some of Pushkin's poems (notably in the "Bronze Horseman") he can feel a certain kinship between the Russian poet and Edgar Allan Poe and that it is not unreasonable to suppose that the subject of this poem was inspired by Poe when the two poets met in St. Petersburg. But Ray Roop is portrayed first of all as a business man. As an important shareholder of a construction concern which planned the building of a factory in Magnitogorsk, he came to Russia to see the realization of this project. The great open spaces of Siberia reminded him in some ways of the American West.

It was not, however, the lingering decline of capitalism nor the chronic unemployment which forced the majority of American engineers, depicted in Soviet literature, to come to Russia, but rather a vivid and sincere desire to see for themselves the new experiment. Such are the motives of the engineer John Charlie in the novel *The Depth* by Pavel Nizovoy, the engineer Stevenson in Yakov Ilyin's already mentioned novel, and of Jimmy Clark in Bruno Yasensky's

novel *A Man Changes His Skin*.

Engineer Stevenson went to Russia because of his deep interest in what was taking place there: "He was interested in the creation of industry in the enormous backward country. Moreover, he wanted to know how the social life of Soviet Russia was organized as compared to that of America." Stevenson believes that "a man who works has no fatherland. His fatherland is his work. If construction is being carried on in Mexico, in Shanghai, or on the Kola Peninsula —the working man's place is there."

What then did Stevenson and many other American engineers find when they came to Soviet Russia? Having worked eighteen months at the Stalingrad Tractor Works, and having spent part of his vacation inspecting the building of other factories, Stevenson "saw everywhere a lot of disorder, poverty, crowded conditions, and dirt, but at the same time he saw factories, wharfs, ports, railroads, clubs, schools, cinemas and bridges everywhere being built, gardens and parks were being planted. . . There was a general animation in the country." And in this fact both Stevenson and John Charlie (in Nizovoy's *The Depth*) see the explanation of "the enthusiasm of the Russians and of their faith in the Five Year Plan." "An atmosphere of continuous gamble, something between a sporting contest and a game for high stakes" was what struck Jimmy Clark most of all at the construction projects in Tadzhikistan (in Yasensky's *A Man Changes His Skin*). "The scope of the construction stirred Stevenson as an engineer and a technician." He witnessed the erection of factory buildings in the former "prairies" at a faster tempo, perhaps, than it could be done by private enterprises in America.

The American engineers, while sometimes falling under the influence of this atmosphere of "sporting contest," continued, however, to maintain a critical attitude towards the "gambling" spirit, which in their opinion might contribute to temporary success, but in the long run would hurt industrial construction. The second serious defect of Soviet industrialization, they believed, was the poor organization of production, the lack of single authority, the distrust on the part of the management for the heads of the individual guilds of the young enterprises, a general atmosphere of distrust towards the specialists. When in Yasensky's novel, *A Man Changes His Skin*, the old experienced engineer Chetveryakov is removed from his job for the slowing up of the tempo of construction, Jimmy Clark is unable to understand exactly how Chetveryakov was at fault. Still less could he understand the meaning of the accusation of "rightist opportunism" made against Chetveryakov. He does not quite dare, however,

to ask for an explanation from the girl interpreter assigned to him because "in the depth of his heart he feels that he sides with Chetveryakov." Clark suffers from the feeling that from him, as an American engineer, some miracle is expected, while if he were in Chetveryakov's place "he would probably have acted in the same way and now been without a job." Chetveryakov's suggestions had been in the main not to chase after "boastful tempos," but to take actual conditions into account when planning. . . .

In spite of all these criticisms on the part of the American engineers, they themselves were often fascinated by the tempo of the work, by the very process of overcoming difficulties. Engineers of a more practical nature, like Barker in Yasensky's book, leave Russia, but the majority remain; they come to like the work and become attached to the people. It is true that all this refers to the first half of the thirties, that is to say prior to 1938, when, during the general purge, the great majority of foreigners were compelled to leave Russia.

Two circumstances helped to reconcile the American engineers to the defects of Soviet construction which they realized so clearly. The years of construction in Russia coincided with the years of a serious world crisis which had not spared America. When Stevenson went back to America for his vacation he had thoughts of remaining there. But he found a serious crisis in America. Heretofore not at all interested in politics, he now begins to make comparisons: "A backward, poverty-stricken, peasant country is building factories, roads, towns; the richest country in the world is curtailing production, is unable to insure for its energetic and efficient population a life which would correspond to the needs developed by contemporary technique." And Stevenson again returns to Russia. His former firm faith in the American economic system as the best in the world was undermined. Yakov Ilyin has had the tact not to make of Stevenson a supporter of Soviet communism, as many other writers would have done. Gropingly, Stevenson's mind moves in another direction, and he finally concludes that all the difficulties of contemporary states are rooted in an imperfect social order. The leadership of life must pass to the sociologists, engineers, economists, and scientists. Society must live according "to the same clear and transparent laws as does production." This, not yet fully formed attraction for "technocracy," is characteristic not of Stevenson alone, but of other American engineers and it can also be felt in Soviet workers.

Returning to the Stalingrad Tractor Works at the beginning of the second Five Year Plan, Stevenson finds many changes. There is

still much inefficiency in the organization, but the work is gradually getting into its stride. Soviet engineers are capable and energetic. Stevenson thinks not without sorrow of the fact that his contract with the management of the factory will soon expire. Of course, he will find work in another factory, but he is annoyed at the thought that the number of foreign engineers is everywhere being reduced and that the Soviet enterprises are beginning to get along without the help of foreigners.

There is also another cause for Stevenson's sadness. In the course of his work he has become attached to the people with whom he worked and has even grown to love them. Here we approach the second circumstance which played such a great part in the attitude of American specialists towards Russia's industrialization, namely the psychology of the rank and file of the participants in the construction—the Russian people, with whom the American engineers came closely in contact for the first time during their mutual work. Poor, enduring, talented, with a great capacity for survival, these people, during the hardest times of construction and unheard of privations, succeeded in arousing the admiration of American specialists and caused them to moderate their judgment as to the prospects of socialist construction. The "spiritual atmosphere" of the people conquered the Americans.

Soviet authors evidently paid little attention at the time to the impressions which the plain Russian people produced upon the American engineers. But this perhaps is the very reason why these impressions reach the reader in all their freshness, unclouded by unnecessary discussions.

The Americans' reaction to the plain Russian people is well expressed in the already mentioned novel *The Depth*, by Pavel Nizovoy. After work John Charlie goes for a walk and comes upon a primitive picnic. The older people are just resting and smoking, the young people are dancing. Charlie is especially attracted by a dashing young carpenter who is playing the harmonica and singing limbericks, probably composed on the spot. The girls dance, and in their dance there is so much natural grace, so much spontaneity and joy of life that Charlie cannot take his eyes from them. Noticing his admiration one of the lads asks with a kind of proud friendliness: "Comrade American, don't our girls dance well? Eh? Am I right?" John Charlie vaguely realizes that the remarkable thing about this group is not its youth, not the beauty of the girls, but "something else—greater," something that will never be forgotten.

We find an analogous description of a New Year's party in Yakov

Ilyin's novel. An "American lunch-room" has been established at the Stalingrad factory. Stevenson goes to a party there feeling bored at the thought of seeing his countrymen and their wives, of listening to the old phonograph records which he had already been sick of hearing in America. But because it was New Year, Russian technicians, engineers, employees, workmen and their wives and friends had come to the party. They sang their songs and limericks, danced their dances, and with such genuine joy listened to American records and danced American jazz that Stevenson was quite moved. But what touched him most, what made him feel that these people were close and dear to him was that which the Communist Gazgan, present at the party, found most embarrassing. "Gazgan," says the author "was ashamed of their songs and dances. He blushed as though he was to blame for the backwardness, the primitiveness of this archaic peasant culture." He was annoyed that these people who had created such wonderful machines at the factory, "sang old-fashioned songs, danced like their grandfathers had danced a hundred years ago, who had never seen either a glider or a tractor. They chose a nice thing to show! They are boasting of their backwardness, and that in front of foreigners!"

In this involved pattern of psychological reactions one begins to see the essence of that "spiritual atmosphere" which draws together the people of the two countries. The American engineers for the most part belong to the democratic strata of society. A kind of organic social democracy is inherent to them, due to a certain primitiveness and youthfulness of American culture. It was just that primitive democracy that helped the Americans to penetrate into the depth of the living Russian people, to sense their originality, their talent, and their great, only partly realized, potentialities. From this meeting with the Russian people, the American specialists brought back to their homeland not only a feeling of attachment to Russia, but also a faith in the great future of her people.

# Russia and Germany

## An Historical Survey of Russo-German Relations

By A. LOBANOV-ROSTOVSKY

### I

THE PROBLEM of Germany's relations with Russia has loomed larger and larger in history as Germany grew in power during the last decades of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century, and in the last analysis has been one of the major factors in starting the two world wars which have shaken the very foundations of world civilization. With a keen eye to the future, the Russian Chancellor, Count Nesselrode, said nearly a century ago in a circular note issued in June, 1849, that "the idea of material unity (in Germany) . . . would infallibly result in a war between Germany and her neighbors."<sup>1</sup>

What the Russian diplomat meant thereby was that Germany would remain peaceful only when weak and divided, as she had been during the first half of the nineteenth century, and that her unification would result in an inevitable menace to her neighbors, i.e., France to the west and Russia to the east. The menace would be greater to Russia, for any incentive for expansion would inevitably draw Germany eastwards—the *Drang Nach Osten* of future days—by the very nature of European geography and the distribution of the population of that continent. This brings us to the root of the whole problem: the struggle between two races, the Slav and the Teuton, which antedates the existence of both Russia and Germany. Let us remember that the original home of the Slavic peoples extended from the Danube in the South to the Baltic in the North and westward as far as the Elbe river, while to the east we may presume that they had established themselves in the basin of the Dnieper river and its tributaries. At any rate we find them there when Russian history began to emerge out of obscurity at the turn of the ninth cen-

<sup>1</sup>M. Polievktov, *Nikolai I*, Moscow, 1918, p. 356.

tury, while Charlemagne on his side had succeeded in impressing a structure of empire upon the various Teutonic tribes. Let us also remember that the Frankish Emperor warred incessantly with the Slavs in an effort to extend his Empire both eastward and southward. Thus at the outset we find two major factors which will be of paramount importance in the history of both races. First, the eastern half of Germany, following the line where the Elbe cuts present day Germany in two and including Prussia, Pomerania, Silesia, and even a portion of Saxony, was originally Slavic and not German. Second, throughout the middle ages the Germans steadily colonized these areas, by destroying the Slavic populations living there, or by forcing them to emigrate eastward and southward. Thus to the consciousness of the western Slavs, and particularly to the immediate neighbors of the Germans, the Poles, and the Czechs, the Germans have always appeared as the chief menace to their national existence, hence their chief enemy. Further eastward the Russians, protected on the west by this belt of Slavs and on the north by the primitive tribes of Lithuanians, Ests, and Letts dwelling in the wilderness along the eastern Baltic coast, were not immediately cognizant of this German menace. During the first four centuries of her history (862-1240) Russia was busy warding off invasions from Asia. Furthermore, she had received her state organization from the Swedish Vikings, and her religion and culture from Byzantium. She was thus looking both northwest and south, and Germany in effect did not exist for her.

It was in the thirteenth century that Germany was to thrust herself suddenly and most dramatically into Russian history, at a very critical time for Russia, just as she lay prostrate at the heels of the Tartars of Genghis Khan who had crushed out of existence the brilliant and promising Grand Principality of Kiev. Only one section of Russia had escaped the Mongol domination: the territory around the city of Novgorod located south of Finland and east of the Baltic. Novgorod, the second most important city in Russia, had risen to great prosperity and power owing to her trade with the Baltic, and a depot of the German Hanseatic League had been established there to tap the wealth of the Russian hinterland which Novgorod had colonized. Such a position was inevitably to draw the envious attention of her powerful neighbors, and Sweden made an unsuccessful attempt to invade her territory; whereupon the Teutonic Knights, after having conquered the territory along the Baltic, invaded Novgorodian territory in turn and captured Pskov, the sister-city of Novgorod. The Novgorodian army, however, under the able

leadership of Prince Alexander Nevsky inflicted such a crushing defeat on the German Knights (1242) that they gave up any further attempts to invade Russian territory, and for another two centuries Germany once more faded out of the Russian picture. With the rise of Moscow, Novgorod's days were counted and, as for the rest of Russia, the Tartar invasion had so effectively segregated it from western Europe, that Russia was forgotten. But in the meantime, Moscow was busy "collecting the Russian lands," in other words, unifying the country once more, and Europe, which came to regard Poland as the easternmost outpost of western civilization, was scarcely aware of what was taking place behind the curtain which the Mongol domination had rung down on the border of Russia.

It was in the reign of the first Tsar of Muscovy, Ivan III (1462-1505), that the situation changed with dramatic suddenness. Not only did Ivan get rid of the Tartar domination, but by his marriage to the niece of the last Emperor of Byzantium, which took place by proxy in the Vatican and enabled him to claim Russia as the successor to the Byzantine Empire, he quickly brought his country back to the notice of European nations. There is a story, not fully authenticated but which has perhaps a symbolical meaning, of a German Knight, Poppel, who was travelling in Poland and discovered to his amazement that beyond the eastern Polish provinces known at the time as the palatinates of Russia, lay another country, independent and powerful, which had to be reckoned with. He hastened to impart the news to the Holy Roman Emperor who immediately sent an embassy to Moscow offering Ivan the title of King, an offer which the Tsar rejected contemptuously. The outcome of these negotiations was, nevertheless, the conclusion of an alliance between the Holy Roman Empire and Muscovy. In the meantime, Moscow was determined to regain the territories on Russia's western border which were lost to Poland-Lithuania during the dark days of the Tartar invasion, and the series of wars thereby initiated were bringing Russians and Germans once more closer together through Russia's steady expansion westwards. But now the situation changed, and it was Russia's turn to attack. Under the Grandson of Ivan III, Ivan the Terrible (1533-1584), whose cruelty has obscured his political genius, the Russians over-ran Livonia, the last foothold of the decaying order of the German Knights, and not only conquered the greater part of the country, but established a puppet state under the rule of the Danish Prince Magnus. Even though Ivan's armies were ultimately defeated by the Poles under Stephen Bathory aided by the Swedes, this Russian invasion of Livonia initiated a long series

of wars which ultimately, in the reign of Peter the Great, were to give Russia the domination of the eastern Baltic coast and make Russia a first-class power. So far, however, the contacts between Russia and Germany had been far apart, and the clashes between them more or less accidental, limited to the realm of the Teutonic Knights. The score, up to that time, had been even. The reforms of Peter the Great and his military victories, which made Russia a full-fledged member of the European community of nations, ushered in a new phase in Russo-German relations.

## II

The contemporaneous rise of Russia and Prussia in the first half of the eighteenth century to the status of great powers modified completely the balance of power in Europe and forced both countries to take cognizance of each other. But Russia had gained one advantage over Prussia: whereas Prussia had to await the coming of Frederick the Great to the throne in 1740 and to challenge the domination of Austria in Central Europe in a series of bloody wars, before her power was acknowledged—Russia gained her position of supremacy in eastern and northern Europe through Peter the Great's victory over Sweden in 1721, two decades earlier. Moreover, in the last phase of the war against Sweden, Russian armies appeared for the first time in history on German soil and joined with the Danish and Saxon armies in laying siege to Stralsund (1711). The following year the Russians occupied Mecklenbourg, later Holstein, and finally one Russian column captured Hambourg, while another force took Lübeck. Profiting by the presence of his forces in these duchies, Peter arranged the marriage of his daughter Ann with the Duke Karl Friedrich of Holstein-Gottorp, while his niece Catherine was married to the Duke Karl Leopold of Mecklenbourg. The marriage treaties gave the Russian Tsar not only the right to garrison the two duchies with his troops, but established a virtual Russian protectorate over these two strategically important states, located in north-central Germany and at the very neck of the Danish peninsula, in other words, at the very entrance of the Baltic. On the other hand, by another marriage, that of Catherine's sister Ann to the Duke of Courland, Peter paved the way for the ultimate absorption of that important duchy into Russia, thus extending Russian domination over the whole coast of the Baltic, up to the very Prussian frontier. Peter thereby incurred the hostility of the King of England, and of the Holy Roman Emperor, but Prussia which had timidly partici-

pated in the campaign in Germany against Sweden, was in a hurry to extend immediate recognition to the new Russian Empire. Austria, facing in 1728 the power of the so-called Hanoverian Alliance of France, England, Prussia, and Denmark, realized the value of Russia as an ally and changed her hostility to friendship in time to secure the aid of Russian troops in her struggle against France over the question of Austria's domination in Italy. Thus it was that a Russian corps 20,000 strong under General Lacy proceeded in 1735 through Silesia and Bohemia to the Rhine, this being the first of the four times that the Russian armies appeared on the banks of that historic river. The next time was during the war of the Austrian Succession, when, it will be recalled, Frederick the Great challenged the might of Austria by invading Silesia. Russia had no direct interest in this war except that the rise of Prussian power, as demonstrated by the victories of Frederick the Great in this war, was deemed in St. Petersburg as endangering Russia's newly acquired position in Europe. Hence, Empress Elizabeth of Russia, bitterly anti-German herself, decided to honor once more her treaty obligations with Austria, and a Russian army 30,000 strong under Prince Repnin marched once more to the Rhine in 1747. Though on both of these occasions the Russian troops did not participate in the actual fighting, the war having both times come to an end as they reached the Rhine, still these incidents were illustrative of the fact that Russia was now powerful enough to intervene in the affairs of Germany, rather than the other way around. Under these circumstances a showdown between Russia and Prussia became inevitable, and it came nine years later in the course of the Seven Years' War (1756-1763). In the course of the so-called diplomatic revolution which saw in the interval between these two wars a complete reversal of alliances in Europe, Russia alone did not change sides, and remained with Austria. In a convention signed between Austria and Russia, it is said characteristically that "the peace of Europe can never be assured until the means of disturbing it are taken away from the King of Prussia, accordingly their Imperial Majesties will make all efforts to render this service to humanity."<sup>2</sup>

### III

The Seven Years' War was important for Russia in several ways. It was the first great conflict in Europe not directly affecting Russia,

<sup>2</sup>F. Martens. *Recueil des traitées et Conventions conclus par la Russie avec les Puissances Etrangères*, St. Petersburg, 1874, I, 207.

in which Russia took part, and it was the first major test of the new Russian army which had to face a first-class military machine under the leadership of one of the greatest captains of all times. The Russian army even though indifferently commanded came out of the test with signal credit, especially if we compare its performance with the miserable showing of the French army which sustained one crushing defeat after another, and of the Austrians who, though they did win some victories, were so cautious as to never venture far from their armed camps. The war revealed definitely that the Russian infantry was a match for any Prussian infantry, particularly in stubborn defense. The main asset of Frederick's army was its incomparable cavalry under Seidlitz, but this cavalry, which had crushed the French at Rossbach, was unable to break through the lines of Russian infantry. The Russians had very marked superiority in artillery, having introduced a new weapon, the formidable Shuvakov mortar. Thus it was that of the four major battles fought by the Russian army in this war, three were Russian victories: Gross-Jägersdorf, Kay, and Kunersdorf, while one, Zorndorf, was a draw with both sides claiming victory. The battle of Kunersdorf (August 12, 1759) was the most crushing defeat ever sustained by the Prussians, and Frederick himself wrote the evening of the battle: "I have no more authority over the army. . . They will do well in Berlin to think of their safety. It is a cruel misfortune. I will not survive it. I have no resources left, to tell the truth I consider everything lost." The following year Berlin was occupied for a short time by the Russians. In the meantime, from the outset of the war the Russians having occupied East Prussia, this province remained under Russian administration for nearly five years. Frederick was now at the end of his resources. He was saved by the death of Empress Elizabeth and the advent of Peter III to the throne of Russia (1761). Peter, a Duke of Holstein-Gottorp by birth, was a great admirer of Frederick and more interested in the fate of his native Holstein than that of his adopted country. He made peace with Prussia and returned East Prussia without any compensation. Thus Russia apparently had wasted her strength in a great struggle only to squander the result of her victory. But the logic of history is more just, and what Russia gained was the final acknowledgement of her position as a great power in Europe. Only fifteen years earlier Russia was still not invited to participate in the negotiations for the peace of Aix-la-Chappelle. But now all the nations were courting her, and Catherine the Great, who succeeded Peter III after his short reign, was in the fortunate position of being able to pick her alliances. Frederick in

particular, who had been so contemptuous of Russia, now made it a point to be on good terms with Catherine and sent his brother, Prince Henry, to negotiate with her the Treaty of St. Petersburg, initiating thereby the partitions of Poland. But he discovered to his dismay in his bloodless war of the Bavarian Succession with Austria, that Russia's power had grown to a point where Catherine could effectively intervene in the internal affairs of Germany as well. Neither Austria nor Prussia having any desire to engage in serious warfare over this relatively minor issue, the mediation of Russia and France was sought to settle the conflict. But France, on the verge of a revolution, played a minor rôle in the negotiations, whereas it was Catherine II who worked out the terms of the settlement which was embodied in the Treaty of Teschen, and both Russia and France were made co-guarantors of the internal peace of the Holy Roman Empire. "The position of Russia as the arbiter of Europe marks the full entrance of that great Power into the fellowship of European states."<sup>4</sup>

So far we have seen that the rise of Prussia and Russia had been parallel throughout the century. Now after the death of Frederick the Great (1786) they come to the parting of the ways. The rise of Prussia proved to be ephemeral, whereas Russia gained steadily in power, and the acid test was to be the French Revolution and the subsequent Napoleonic wars. Moreover, Russia was a powerful, centralized, and uniform state, whereas both Austria and Prussia, the two leading Germanic powers, were mere fragments of the somewhat inchoate federation of some 300 states known as the Holy Roman Empire. The record of Austria in the Napoleonic wars was not brilliant; defeated by the French in 1796, in 1800, in 1805, and in 1809, with Vienna twice occupied by Napoleon she was reduced to becoming a near-vassal of France; whereas Prussia, after the terrible debacle of Jena in 1806, virtually ceased to exist as an independent state. Nothing of the sort happened to Russia, and even though Napoleon defeated the Russians at Austerlitz and Friedland, he was sufficiently impressed by the resistance they put up to sign a treaty of alliance with Russia (1807). By the treaty of Tilsit Napoleon and Tsar Alexander virtually divided Europe between them, and Prussia had to pay for the war in loss of territory.

A clause inserted in the Treaty of Tilsit declared somewhat contemptuously: "His Majesty the Emperor Napoleon with deference to His Majesty the Emperor of All the Russias and desirous of

<sup>4</sup>James Frank Bright, *Joseph II*, London, 1923, p. 120.

giving proof of his sincere desire to unite the two nations in a bond of confidence and unalterable friendship agrees to restore to His Majesty the King of Prussia the countries, cities, and territories conquered and named hereafter."\* But postponing the evacuation under one pretext or another, Napoleon kept his troops in most of these territories and forced Prussia to join in the invasion of Russia in 1812. It was not until Napoleon's disastrous retreat from Russia that there was any real hope of liberation for Germany. After the French were expelled from Russia, there arose in that country the question what to do next. Kutuzov, the Commander-in-Chief of the Russian army, backed by a powerful group at the Headquarters, argued that Russia, having liberated her own territories, should leave Europe alone and concentrate on reconstruction, but Alexander, partly under the influence of the Prussian statesman Baron Stein, but more because of his own political views, carried the war into Germany to fight Napoleon to the finish. The Prussian corps which had fought on the side of Napoleon in the invasion of Russia was the first of the allied contingents to change sides, and on February 28, 1813, the important Treaty of Kalish was signed with Prussia. By this treaty Russia made peace with Prussia and pledged to put an army of 150,000 in the field to liberate the territories of Germany from the French and to restore to Prussia the frontiers as of the year 1806. At the same time, Alexander issued a proclamation to the German people promising them the restoration of their liberty and independence as well as the reestablishment of a constitution "modelled on the ancient spirit of the German people." In the course of the subsequent campaign, Alexander's power and influence was steadily increasing until he assumed after his triumphant entry into Paris the virtual leadership of the allied coalition, while the rôle played by the King of Prussia was becoming more and more modest. In the words of a shrewd French observer, the King of Prussia was acting as the senior A.D.C. to the Tsar.

#### IV

The pattern of the new Europe which emerged after the Napoleonic wars was fixed by the Congress of Vienna, and similarly the pattern of Russia's relations with Germany, which carried through till 1890. Let us therefore analyze it in greater detail. It is still a divided Germany which reappears in the nineteenth century, with

\*Preamble to Article IV of the Treaty of Tilsit.

Austria dominating the Germanic Confederation, and Prussia still weak but gaining strength enough to challenge Austria successfully. Russia's position in this picture was determined by several important factors. The first of these goes back to the marriage of the daughters and nieces of Peter the Great with German princes. These marriages, in the tangled problem of succession to the Russian throne, brought eventually two German dynasties to the throne of Russia, first the house of Brunswick and then the house of Holstein-Gottorp, which ruled until 1917 under the name of the Romanov dynasty. Thus a veritable tradition was established whereby the members of the Russian imperial family, both male and female, married into German princely or royal families. Thus, Alexander I married a princess of Baden; Nicholas I, the daughter of the King of Prussia; Alexander II and Nicholas II, princesses of Hesse-Darmstadt. Other unions accounted for close family ties with the houses of Württemberg, Oldenburg, and Bavaria. These dynastic unions resulted in a tremendous increase of the influence of Germany in Russia, and the immigration of Germans of all classes and standing into that country. Particularly, in the eighteenth century and more specifically in the 1730's, Germans virtually ruled Russia by occupying the most prominent positions in the country. But subsequently it began to work the other way, and the court of St. Petersburg acquired tremendous influence in Germany's internal political affairs, through the fact that so many minor German princes became veritable "clients" of their mighty relatives who ruled Russia. This factor became apparent immediately after the Congress of Vienna, when the rulers of Württemberg, Baden, and other German states made timid attempts at constitutional reforms and appealed for the protection of the still liberal Alexander I against the machinations of Metternich, supported by reactionary Prussia. When, at the Congress of Carlsbad (1819), Metternich was able to impose reactionary measures on the German states, he wrote with relief that for once he was able to do what he had desired because "that terrible Alexander" was not there. But Alexander's liberalism was a passing phase, and, alarmed by the rise of revolutionary agitation in Europe, the Tsar eventually accepted fully Metternich's views.

This brings in the second important factor binding Russia to the two Germanic powers. Indeed from now on there will be a complete uniformity of views and policy between the "Three Northern Courts" as Russia, Austria, and Prussia will come to be known later, and their policy will be one of repression and struggle against all revolutionary tendencies in Europe. For the next quarter of a cen-

tury there will be a complete unanimity and conformity of views between the three powers and more particularly between Russia and Prussia. Nicholas I, who succeeded Alexander I in 1825, was a man of limited vision but determined and constant in purpose and action. He somewhat distrusted Metternich, though fully embracing the latter's policies and views, but he felt a particular kinship with his father-in-law, King Friedrich Wilhelm III of Prussia. After the revolution of 1830 in France, the three allied sovereigns resolved to meet at regular intervals to map a common policy with regard to the outstanding problems of Europe. Such were the meetings of Muenchengraetz and Toeplitz, and the fate of Europe was often sealed in these obscure Central European towns. Nicholas gave to Europe a striking testimony of Russo-Prussian solidarity by suggesting joint maneuvers of the armies of both countries just before the meeting at Toeplitz. Indeed a token Prussian corps crossed for the occasion the Russian border, and at Kalish a combined Russo-Prussian army, some 60,000 strong under the command of the Russian Field Marshal, Paskevich, carried out for several days intricate maneuvers which caused a tremendous sensation all over Europe.

The great revolutionary storms which swept over Europe in 1848 shook thrones and plunged the countries of Central Europe into civil war and anarchy. In Austria Metternich fell, and Emperor Ferdinand fled from Vienna, later to abdicate; in Prussia King Friedrich Wilhelm IV was made virtual prisoner of the revolutionaries. Russia alone remained perfectly peaceful and unaffected by the events, and Nicholas I, strong as ever in the face of civil wars raging along his border, pursued with his usual constancy the policy of upholding the principles of legitimacy and conservatism. This policy was to bring forth inevitably the intervention of Russia in the internal affairs of both Germany and Austria. When, in 1848, Prussia in the throes of violent nationalist agitation, started a war against Denmark for the sake of Schleswig-Holstein, Nicholas virtually ordered the Prussian army out of Denmark, and Prussia meekly complied. More spectacular was the aid he gave to the young Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria. The rebellion of the Hungarians developed into a war for independence, and the defeat of the Austrian armies endangered the very existence of the Hapsburg dynasty; whereupon Emperor Francis Joseph appealed to Nicholas I for aid, and the Tsar sent a Russian army 90,000 strong under Field Marshal Prince Paskevich which after a hard campaign broke the resistance of the Hungarian army (1849). The following year, when a conflict developed between Austria and Prussia over the

situation in the duchy of Hesse Cassel and over the attempt made by Prussia to unify Germany under Prussian and not Austrian leadership, both parties appealed to Russia for aid. Once more Nicholas acted in the name of legitimacy and supported Austria, permitting Austria to inflict upon Prussia the "humiliation of Olmütz," which forced Prussia to demobilize and to dissolve the Union of Erfurt she had created. These three instances produced a great sensation in Europe, and Russia was dubbed the Policeman of Europe. When, accordingly, a coalition of European powers fought Russia in the Crimean War, Austria, fearful of the power of Russia and anxious to take her place in the Balkans, joined with the enemies of Russia, thereby fulfilling the prophecy of the late Austrian Chancellor Prince Schwarzenberg that Austria would surprise the world by her ingratitude. This brought Russia and Austria to the parting of the ways, and the bitterness created in Russia by this attitude was never forgotten, making all subsequent attempts at reconciliation more or less ephemeral. Not so with Prussia. During the Crimean War (1853-1856) Prussia maintained an attitude of friendly neutrality which was appreciated in Russia and which was to some extent due to the influence of Bismark, whose star was then beginning to rise. Bismark was temperamentally attuned to Russia, and he enjoyed his stay in that country as Prussian minister to St. Petersburg and learned to speak the language. Prior to this, as Prussian envoy to the Diet of Frankfurt he made a lasting friendship with the future Russian Chancellor, Prince Gorchakov, who at the time was Russian Minister to Frankfurt. Thus began an association of nearly a quarter of a century between two men who were to mould the destinies of Europe. It was to be expected, therefore, that the first diplomatic move of Bismark when he came to power in Prussia (1862) was to offer a veritable military alliance with Russia for the purpose of suppressing an insurrection in Russian Poland which had broken out the following year. In the face of the most virulent opposition of the Prussian parliament and liberal public opinion he sent General von Avensleven to St. Petersburg to conclude a secret convention to this effect, and though the Russians were able to suppress the Polish insurrection without Prussian aid, the convention of Alvensleben carried a much wider international significance inasmuch as it was a veritable alliance between the two countries, which endured in one form or another up to Bismark's fall in 1890. This policy brought Bismark handsome dividends; it permitted him not to worry about Prussia's eastern frontier while he was engaged in three wars with Denmark, Austria, and France which resulted in the creation of the German

Empire; further, while he was engaged in the war against Austria, Russian action neutralized the menace of French intervention, and conversely during the Franco-Prussian war, the menacing attitude assumed by Russia forced Austria to remain neutral. Russia on her side benefited from the alliance in three ways: it permitted Russia to expand in Central Asia and the Far East without worrying about her European frontier, it humbled Austria, and it gave a chance during the Franco-Prussian war to annul the humiliating clause of the Treaty of Paris which forced Russia to demilitarize the Black Sea. It is significant that the first crack in the edifice of this close alliance occurred shortly after the foundation of the new German Empire in 1871. Four years later occurred the mysterious war scare with France, engineered by Bismark. Whether Germany was intending to fight France or not is a moot question, but France, terrified by this menace, appealed to Russia, and Alexander II accompanied by Gorchakov hastened to Berlin and obtained from Emperor Wilhelm the disavowal of Bismark's plans. Gorchakov publicized somewhat too ostentatiously his diplomatic victory and Bismark, thwarted for the first time in his career, never forgot the snub. Not only did the friendship between the two chancellors turn to bitter enmity, but Bismark took his revenge at the Congress of Berlin by siding with the enemies of Russia and inflicting upon Russia bitter diplomatic defeat, even though he claimed merely to have played the rôle of an "honest broker." It is again significant that the very next year (1879) he signed a treaty of alliance with Austria which was to become a cornerstone of the triple alliance and was definitely directed against Russia. But Bismark remained obsessed by what he termed the "nightmare of coalitions," and therefore feared to alienate Russia and throw her into the arms of Germany's enemies. Furthermore, he was faced with the unswerving loyalty of Emperor Wilhelm towards Russia. Hence he negotiated the Dreikaiserbund, the treaty of alliance of the three Emperors, which in effect was the recreation of the alliance of the three northern courts, and which gave Russia the privileges she desired in Bulgaria and in the Straits question. But the relations between Russia and Austria had become so tense, and their rivalry so acute in the Balkans that this combination simply could not work.

## V

The Bulgarian Crisis of 1887, with which we need not concern ourselves here, nearly touched off a war between Austria and Russia,

and it became impossible to renew the alliance of the three Emperors. But Bismarck still clung to his alliance with Russia without, however, giving up the Triple Alliance with Austria and Italy. Accordingly, a new treaty, this time merely between Russia and Germany, was signed, which is known to history as the Reinsurance Treaty. One might say that from Bismarck's point of view it was a reinsurance that Russia should not line up with France or England, a prospect he dreaded. The death of Gorchakov and his replacement in Russia by the cautious Giers had very considerably eased the situation between Russia and Germany, and unruffled harmony was once more restored between the two countries. Thus the treaty ran its course, and negotiations for its routine renewal were proceeding without a hitch when the sudden fall of Bismarck changed the whole situation. The new German Chancellor Caprivi continued these negotiations, which for the sake of convenience were transferred after the fall of Bismarck to St. Petersburg. There the negotiations were proceeding smoothly and were about to be concluded, when suddenly and unexpectedly the German Ambassador notified the Russian government that his government had decided not to renew the treaty and to cease all further negotiations.

This abrupt termination of an alliance which under one form or another had lasted unbrokenly since 1813, came as a complete surprise to the Russian government. To a great extent it was due to a reaction in Germany against the Bismarckian system of policies and to the intrigues of the sinister Baron Holstein who, after the fall of the Iron Chancellor, had assumed a complete, if secret, control of Germany's foreign policy. Possibly it was due to some extent to the openly expressed Germanophobia of Tsar Alexander III, and the vociferous anti-German agitation both in Russian army circles and in the press, conducted by more or less influential Panslavist groups. Be that as it may, it changed completely the pattern of Russia's foreign policy, and Russia was faced with the danger of isolation in Europe, to the extent that Alexander, with bitter sarcasm, welcomed in a speech the Prince of Montenegro as the only friend of Russia. The alternative solution was to respond to the overtures of France, a course which was viewed with great misgivings in Russian bureaucratic circles in view of the supposed radical tendencies of the French republic, which would endanger Russian autocracy; but there was no choice, and the Franco-Russian alliance came into existence after a military convention of far reaching import had been concluded in St. Petersburg between the two countries. It was now Germany's turn to be alarmed, and following the fall of Bismarck's

immediate successor the weak Chancellor Caprivi, Prince Hohenlohe, the new chancellor, set himself the task of bringing Russo-German relations back to normalcy.

On the Russian side, on March 11, 1895, Prince Lobanov-Rostovsky, former Ambassador to Vienna, London, and Berlin, had replaced the cautious Giers as Minister of Foreign Affairs. A man of vision and energy, Lobanov sponsored a system of continental alliances in Europe against Great Britain. This permitted him to shift the emphasis of Russia's foreign policy to the Far East, where both the rise of Russian industry and the building of the Trans-Siberian Railway were raising important problems for Russia. The continental alliance envisioned by Lobanov was to be based on the Franco-Russian alliance supplemented by a renewed friendship between Germany and which, therefore, presupposed a reconciliation between Germany and France. This policy brought Russia handsome dividends in the Far East, where both France and Germany supported Russia in an ultimatum Lobanov delivered to Japan, forcing Japan to abandon her hold on Chinese territory in Manchuria after the termination of the Sino-Japanese war of 1895. But Lobanov died suddenly the following year before his policy had really been put to a test in Europe. The idea of the continental block did not die with him and found a new support in the person of Witte, the Finance Minister in Russia, who in his *Memoirs* erroneously attributes the idea to himself.<sup>5</sup> Witte presented a memorandum on this subject to the Tsar which was forwarded to Kaiser Wilhelm in Berlin, and in the celebrated "Willy-Nicky" correspondence between the Tsar and his German cousin, the latter made a blunt bid for Russia's friendship by playing up overtures made by England to Germany (May 30, 1898). But it was the Boer War which gave a renewed vitality to this idea of forming a bloc between Russia, France, and Germany directed at England. Both Germany, with the famous Krüger telegram, and Russia, with a violent anti-British press campaign in that country, had openly expressed their sympathy for the cause of the Boers. Accordingly, on January 1, 1900, the Kaiser paid a New Year's call on the Russian Ambassador in Berlin, Count Osten-Sacken and made the startling suggestion that the Russian army should march on India, while Germany would undertake to guard Russia's western frontier.<sup>6</sup> The Russian government cautiously

<sup>5</sup>*The Memoirs of Count Witte*, New York, 1921, pp. 408-409.

<sup>6</sup>Very confidential letter of Osten-Sacken to Count Muraviev, Berlin, January 7/19, 1900 in *Correspondence Diplomatique du Baron de Staal*, Paris 1929, II, 448-449.

turned down this offer, but suggested in turn a joint diplomatic intervention to end the African war. Germany replied to this suggestion demanding that as a preliminary step a general agreement should be concluded between France, Russia, and Germany eventually guaranteeing each other's possessions in Europe—in other words, the guaranteeing by France of the German hold over Alsace-Lorraine. France's refusal to do this brought the scheme to an end. Nevertheless, a renewed cordiality of relations between Russia and Germany was marked by Kaiser Wilhelm's visit to Reval in August, 1902, following which the Kaiser in a speech at Posen stressed the historic brotherhood and companionship of the Russian and German arms.

When Russia got herself involved in the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905), Wilhelm II immediately reasserted his friendship and offered to protect Russia's western frontiers, at the price, however, of a new and more favorable treaty of commerce with Russia to replace the treaty of 1894 which had just expired. The Hamburg-America Line undertook the coaling of the fleet of Admiral Rozhestvensky on its way to the Far East, and furthermore Germany gave asylum to three Russian warships in the port of Kiaochow. When England protested these moves, the Kaiser wrote to the Tsar declaring he was risking a war with England for the sake of Russia, and once more the negotiations for the forming of the continental bloc were renewed in Berlin between Holstein and Osten-Sacken, and a draft treaty for the conversion of the Franco-Russian Alliance into a Triple Alliance was forwarded to St. Petersburg. France was not notified of these negotiations in view of the anti-German attitude of Delcassé, and the matter remained in abeyance. But when Delcassé fell, as a result of the celebrated crisis connected with the Moroccan situation, which gave Germany a resounding diplomatic victory, the Kaiser suddenly revived the issue in the dramatic and showy way so dear to his temperament.

Meeting the Tsar in the bay of Bjorko during a summer cruise, the Kaiser succeeded, in the privacy of the imperial yacht and without any of the responsible statesmen present, in getting Nicholas II to sign a treaty of alliance with Germany (1905). This treaty placed Russia in the ambiguous situation of being allied with Germany against France and being allied with France against Germany. The action of the two sovereigns produced such an outcry of indignation amongst the members of their respective governments that it was never ratified and soon afterwards annulled. This fiasco marks the termination of the attempts to renew the past alliances and definitely

starts the drift towards war.

## VI

A treaty is only valuable as it corresponds to the real essence of a situation it intends to cover; that is precisely what was not the case at Bjorko. In the past Russia was drawn toward Germany by purely monarchial ties—family relations of the ruling houses on one side, and the interest of the courts in upholding conservative principles on the other. Now these factors were losing their importance in a rapidly changing world and the nations, and not their sovereigns, were facing each other across the borders.

To the Russian people the rise of German industrialism which had been so accentuated in the two preceding decades meant the danger of Russia becoming a kind of economic dependency of Germany. This was brought vividly to their attention by the new treaty of commerce signed in the same year with Germany, which was very unfavorable to Russian economy and which, consequently, produced a great deal of ill feeling in Russia. Furthermore, the ambitious colonial policy inaugurated by the Kaiser, and the stress on the *Drang nach Osten* in the German Pan-Germanist press were viewed in Russia as a menace to the very existence of the country. It resulted in a German penetration of Turkey and by means of the Bagdad Railway, of Persia and Afghanistan — all areas of Russian influence which were deemed vital to the safety of Russia. Thus, once started, the drift toward war became a matter of recriminations and counter-recriminations. Germany was embittered by the Anglo-Russian convention of 1907 which, she claimed, completed the "*Einkreisung*"—the encirclement of Germany. Russia resented the support Germany was giving to Austria in her ambitious Balkan policy and particularly the humiliation of a thinly veiled ultimatum which forced Russia to yield in the Bosnia-Herzegovina crisis of 1908. The attempt by Russia to build up a confederation of Balkan nations to offset the Austrian drive toward Salonica produced the two Balkan wars and brought the war of 1914 one step nearer. When after her stinging defeat at the hands of the Balkan confederation, Turkey invited a large German military mission under General Lieman von Sanders to take charge of the reorganization of the Turkish army, General von Sanders was put in command of the garrison of Constantinople and subsequently was appointed in the same capacity to the fortress city of Erzerum on the Caucasian border. The strategic menace of these moves was to Russia so obvious

that war, now merely a few months away, had become unavoidable.

The collapse first of Russia and then of Germany as a result of the World War ushered in a new social pattern in both countries, but could not modify the problems which both faced in relation to each other as a consequence of a thousand years of history. Curiously, we find in the period of some twenty-three years separating World War I and the present invasion of Russia by Hitler's army, Russo-German relations repeating the cyclical movement of the past centuries in a much more condensed form. If we look at Soviet Russia and Weimar Germany after they both emerged from the turmoil and collapse of immediate post-war years, we find that their mutual international status has regressed a few centuries: Russia, having lost her territories along the Baltic coast and the Polish border, was back to where she was in the late sixteenth century under Ivan the Terrible, whereas Germany, with East Prussia separated from Prussia and with the loss of Silesia, was back where she was in the days of the Electorate of Brandenburg. Separated by Poland and the new Baltic states, both were regarded as outcasts by the other powers and both were weak, hence they found it mutually profitable to come together by signing the treaty of Rapallo (1922). This alliance lasted without a break till Hitler's rise to power in 1933. Both recuperated and regained their strength in this period just as in the first half of the eighteenth century, and once they had become strong, Poland was doomed.

Just as in the time of Catherine II the actual attempt by Stalin and Hitler to come together was made at the expense of Poland in 1939, but this time it lasted only a few months, and when the war came in 1941 it was once more after the Germans had gained predominance over the Balkans. Russia got involved in this war just as in the war of 1914 because she was faced along her western border with a nation which claimed arrogantly the superiority of its culture, political system, race, and power, and which regarded Russia as a field for economic domination in the earlier case, and actual colonial expansion in the present case. The Nazis have merely taken up and emphasized to an incredible degree of supercilious and overbearing confidence the old theme of the superiority of Teuton over Slav, which formed the main theme of the philosophy of Pan-Germanism in the years preceding the war of 1914. But the Russian people through the long history of invasions which they have repelled know that nations, like rivers, tend to overflow, and after their waters expend themselves by flooding vast areas, they are eventually forced back into the old river bed. So with nations, which after

learning their bitter lesson in blood, destruction, and tears, eventually are brought back to reason by the sting of defeat. It has been the not inglorious destiny of Russia that she has served in history more than once as the dam that stems the tide of onrushing waters, and this appears to be the task which her armies together with the armies of the United Nations are at present carrying out with such signal success.

# The Enjoyment of Laughter In Russia

By I. D. W. TALMADGE

STALINGRAD has disproven the popular misconception that the Russians can not fight. Another delusion that still persists is that the Russians can not laugh. That there are laughter-enjoying Russians may come as news to many Americans. To the Western mind, the Russians are a people cursed with somber introspection. They are, supposedly, the possessors of that intangible quality known as the "Slavic soul" which excludes all semblance of gaiety. Scratch a Russian and you find a Tartar—tickle him and he won't laugh. In a word, all Russians are chronic pessimists.

This false notion was perpetuated by the ponderous plays of Chekhov and Gorky, and notably by the psychologizing novels of Dostoevsky. It is generally little known that Chekhov was also one of Europe's foremost humorists with a wit not unlike that of our own Mark Twain; and that Russian letters made major contributions to the promotion of gaiety among nations.

In view of the common delusion about the heavy seriousness of the Russians, the products of Muscovite satirists never became saleable commodities in Western Europe and America. Thus Saltykov-Shchedrin, Gogol, Averchenko, Teffy, and the humorous tales of Zoshchenko are virtually unknown to the non-Russian reading public.

Humor, nevertheless, has always been as integral a part of Russian life as the samovar, caviar, or vodka. The Russians laughed when oppressed by tsarism and they laugh and enjoy laughter today under the rule of the Soviets. Their seriousness of purpose and ardency of task, even under the stress of war, has not robbed them of a sense of fun. Still, few of the many foreign observers have been aware of the existence of this national sense of humor. To them gaiety seemed incompatible with the harshness of Russian life.

Nothing could be further from the truth. The fight against the Nazis—despite its ruthlessness—is a romantic, almost gay adventure to the younger people of Russia, and humor plays an important part in their scheme of things.

Even the serious-visaged inhabitant of the Kremlin has been known on occasion to crack a joke. A few years ago, he was the target of a dead-or-dying rumor. An American correspondent in Moscow, ordered by his home office to determine the veracity of the reports, used consummate tact. He sent Stalin a note in which, instead of asking baldly, "Are you dead?" suggested that perhaps the lethal rumors constituted another Samuel Clemens incident. With tongue in cheek, Joseph Stalin replied:

"I know from the reports of the foreign press that I long ago abandoned this sinful world and moved into the other world. As one cannot doubt such foreign press dispatches unless he wants to be expelled from the list of civilized people, I request you to believe them and not disturb me in the calm of the other world."

A philosopher once remarked, "Let me hear the jokes of a nation and I will tell you what its people are like." The humor of the Russian people may be classified in two categories: the government-tolerated brand which appears in print, and the bootleg products of anonymous wags which are circulated orally. The former received its Soviet passport only in the late twenties, subsequent to the N.E.P. period. At first its barbs were directed against the external bogeys; the bourgeoisie and its leaders. Chamberlain was perhaps the most crucified victim of Soviet wags. In the course of the last few years prior to the outbreak of the present war, its theatre of action gradually encompassed also the domestic scene. Bureaucracy and inefficiency became the prime butts of Soviet witcisms. The calibre of this government-sanctioned type of humor may be studied by an examination of the files of *Crocodile*, the only satirical publication in the Soviet Union.

*Crocodile* is, in all probability, the most widely read and enjoyed periodical in Russia today. It is the brat in the family of Soviet publications. The authorities wink at the audacity of its gibes which would not be countenanced in the more staid journals. To cite one example of its method. Up to a few years ago government censors barred romantic themes from Soviet literature, denounced romance as frivolous and out of keeping with socialist pursuit. Later such restrictions were relaxed but many a Red editor still shied at printing romance. *Crocodile* set out to poke fun at editorial fraid cats and did it with the following neat story:

Dazzled by permission to compose a love lyric for a provincial newspaper, a proletarian poet submits to his editor this synopsis of what he proposes to write:

- (1) Sitting on a bench.

- (2) Gazing at the moon.
- (3) The aroma of flowers.
- (4) Holding hands.
- (5) Whispering sweet nothings.
- (6) Love as such.
- (7) "You went, and I went, and both of us parted."

Vexed, the editor completely revises the outline, makes elaborate suggestions for a proper Soviet lyric. The lovers, he insists, must be active trade unionists, they must not hold hands or gaze at the moon and should restrict their conversation to a discussion of ideological matters.

Docile, the poet strives to heed the admonitions and produces an effusion which the editor publishes under an eight-column streamer reading:

MORE POWER TO LYRICS  
FORWARD!

There was no bench, there was no moon,  
There were no birds nor flowers.  
They did not kiss, they did not spoon—  
Accountant Petrov and the daughter of Station Master Kowers.  
He said, "I finished my report,"  
And she replied, "I'm glad."  
They rose . . . . . both left  
For everything was . . . . said.

The first medium employed by Soviet satirists was, of course, the cartoon. Its dean is Boris Efimov, who is still art editor of the official government organ, *Izvestia*. His closest *confrères* are D. Moor of the *Pravda*, the largest newspaper in the Soviet Union, and the *Kukriniksi*, a "collective" of three caricaturists who sign their works jointly. From its very inception the Soviet régime realized the propaganda value of posters. Most of them were executed by these artists and were distinguished for their satirical tone.

Next in development came versification—the political fables of Demyan Bedny, the Soviet Béranger. Light poetry was also written by Utkin, Bezimensky, and Mayakovsky. Almost concurrently appeared the early humorous works of Babel, Zoshchenko, Ilf, and the late Petrov who was killed a few months ago during the siege of Sevastopol.

Dramaturgy was the last field to yield to humor. It was not until the end of the twenties that the first comedies appeared on the

boards of Moscow playhouses. An important rôle in its growth was played by Valentine Kataev who is universally conceded to be the pioneer of Soviet comedy. Two of his plays, *Squaring the Circle* and *The Path of Flowers*, have had successful runs in New York. At first the Soviet authorities would permit only a few performances of Kataev's comedies each month—under the general principle, presumably, that there is such a thing as too much humor.

It is noteworthy that Kataev is a native of Odessa. This city is the birthplace also of Ilf, Babel, the Soviet jazz king Utesov, and the popular comedian Khenkin. Odessa in pre-revolutionary years was the Tin Pan Alley of Russia. A gay, southern sea-board city, it supplied the entire country with lyric writers, musicians, clowns, and vaudevillians. The Tsar's officials could not curb Odessa's spirit of buffoonery, the half-hearted attempts of the Soviet authorities met with little more success. From this city emanates much of Soviet oral humor.

Greater latitude is taken by the anonymous authors of oral humor. This genre of sub-rosa satire takes the form of apocryphal stories and anecdotes, lampooning various aspects of Soviet rule. Many of these yarns are credited to high Communist functionaries and, though told *sotto voce*, are enjoyed equally by loyal and critical citizens.

These clandestine jokes are usually of a timely nature and reflect some phase of socialist development in Russia. An anthology of them would constitute a hilarious sociological history of the country.

A story which made the rounds of both camps during the Civil War period tells of a college professor in Omsk who was awakened late one night by severe rapping at his door.

"Who's there?" he asked affrightedly.

"The Commander-in-Chief of the North-Eastern Red Armies," came the booming reply.

Even more timorously the professor inquired, "W-what c-can I do for you, sir?"

"Tell me," the Commander demanded, "is Dusia home?"

(Dusia was the professor's housemaid).

Belonging to the same period is the story of a white guard officer who was fleeing from the Reds. He reached a remote hamlet in Siberia and realizing that the sentiment of its inhabitants was unmistakably pro-Soviet, posed as a Communist emissary. The officer told the peasants that pursuant to a new decree issued by Lenin each village was to be represented in the province soviet by a duly elected "renegade." The unknown term sounded to the villagers

like a very imposing title. The most revered member of the community was selected for this new "post," and two others were appointed to escort him to the capital of the province. When they reached the city, after several days' traveling, the peasants sought out the Soviet administrator and explained to him that they brought their "renegade." It took considerable additional explanation to spare the "honored" peasant from severe punishment.

The intensive atheist campaign which marked the first years of the Revolution gave rise to numerous anecdotes circulated covertly throughout the country. One tells of a note written in Old Slavonic found on a hillock near the frontier by a troop of O.G.P.U. guards. Fearing a fifth column plot, the guards hurried with the note to their captain. Impatiently, the officer had the note translated into Russian and to his amazement read:

"Dear God, you know how difficult life is under the anti-Christ rule of the Satanic Bolsheviks. For this reason, I beg you to send me two hundred rubles to buy provisions for Easter."

The epistle bore the full signature and address of its author. The captain immediately dispatched two of his orderlies to summon the culprit. He came, an aged bewhiskered poor peasant, penitent, and humble. His impecunious and naive appearance touched the heart of the O.G.P.U. official.

"You must realize, my good man," he told the peasant, "that religion is the opiate of the people."

For two hours the officer lectured to the peasant on the "futility of faith." To his surprise, the old man seemed to agree with every agnostic argument advanced. It was apparent to the O.G.P.U. official that he had at last converted the "unenlightened mouzhik" to atheism. Satisfied with his results and realizing how really destitute the old peasant was, the official magnanimously gave him a hundred rubles to buy food.

A few days later the O.G.P.U. patrol found on the same hillock the following note:

"Dear God, thank you for your beneficence but please do not use the corrupt O.G.P.U. as your messengers. Of the two hundred rubles that you sent me, they gave me only a hundred."

Another anecdote with the O.G.P.U. as its central theme takes the form of a parable. A flock of sheep was stopped by frontier guards at the Finnish-Russian border.

"Why are you fleeing from Russia?" the sheep were asked.

"The O.G.P.U. have issued an order," the sheep explained, "to arrest all elephants."

"Why should you fear? You are sheep."

"But," replied the sheep, "try and convince the O.G.P.U."

The adulation of political leaders expressed by naming institutions and cities after them gave rise to the rumor that the Pushkin Monument in Moscow would be renamed the Molotov Statue.

In the same category belongs the following story. The city of Leningrad was originally called St. Petersburg and during the war it was given the more Slavic name, Petrograd. An applicant for a Soviet post was asked where he was born. He replied, "In St. Petersburg."

"Where were you educated?"

"In Petrograd."

"Where do you live?"

"In Leningrad."

"Where would you like to live?"

"In St. Petersburg."

More caustic was the humor during the famine years. Here is a sample.

"What is the difference between India and Russia? In India one man starves for the people, and in Russia the people starve for one man."

In the early thirties, during a keen shortage of consumers' goods, a peasant woman was said to have brought a gold spoon to a Moscow Torgsin shop hoping to purchase a few necessities. The appraiser gave her in exchange a Torgsin check for twelve kopeks. Expectantly she went to the counter to inquire what was available for her small sum. After diligent study of the catalogue, the clerk pleasantly announced that there was an item at twelve kopeks—a wooden spoon.

The introduction of the Five Year Plan for industrialization, perhaps more than any other event in the history of the U.S.S.R., produced a heavy crop of counter-revolutionary jokes. The one story that was most retold is about a person who arrived stark nude at the Moscow depot and proudly announced that "By us in Minsk, we have already fulfilled the Five Year Plan."

Next quantitatively came the stories satirizing collectivization. There were virtually thousands of them told at private gatherings, public meetings, and on street cars. It assumed such proportions that at one time the police threatened to seek out and arrest its narrators. Most of the yarns were of this pattern. The Kremlin was supposedly infested with vermin. No Soviet-made exterminator seemed to help. In desperation, a council of war was convened to solve the pestiferous problem. "Why not collectivize the vermin," a Commissar sug-

gested, "then half of them will starve to death and the other half will run away."

That the penchant of the Russian people for humor did not abate even during the present war is evidenced by this latest story to come out from Moscow. It tells of a Nazi soldier approaching St. Peter at the Gates of Heaven.

"So you're dead now," St. Peter says.

"Oh, no," replies the Hitlerite. "According to the official Berlin communiqué, I'm still triumphantly advancing toward Moscow."

# Cassius Clay's Glimpse Into The Future

## Lincoln's Envoy to St. Petersburg Bade the Two Nations Meet in East Asia

BY ALBERT PARRY

### I

A HOT-HEADED Kentuckian once represented the republican government of the United States at the court of the Russian Tsar. Cassius Marcellus Clay talked a lot, wrote at length, and did some things that were not too good and some that were excellent. His life was long and exciting, but it was in the crucial 1860's that Clay's work was of moment to America—and Russia. He did a thorough job of helping to bring Washington and St. Petersburg together at a time when the two governments, each for different reasons, distrusted London and Paris. That is how Cassius Clay is mainly remembered in our books of history.

But there is another and less often recalled side to fiery Clay's work in the same 1860's. There is his remarkable prevision of a future when his native land and Russia would meet in the Far East, not to clash but to cooperate. He tried to lay a foundation for such a meeting and reciprocity; he was among the first United States diplomats to urge Russo-American identity of interests in Eastern Asia; and in a broader sense he succeeded perhaps more than he himself ever realized.

Early and late he called upon America not to censure but hail Russian expansion eastward. The result of that expansion, he wrote, was "civilization of Asia," consisting of a twofold development—"putting a part of it under a noble government, and consolidating the power and the peace of the Asiatic nations which remain independent, both of which processes inure to the common benefit of the Asiatic races." The rest of mankind would do well to applaud Russia,

for her march was both inevitable and beneficial: "The world should not regard her progress into Asia with distrust but gratification. The new life must come from the West and Russia is the only nation which can give it." Russia was a young nation of great promise. Clay told Americans that their own interests dictated a friendly attitude toward that land of a rising star. He wrote to William H. Seward, Secretary of State:

No people are making more advances, comparatively, in the fine and useful arts, in science, letters, and general intelligence. A great destiny lies before her and let us be careful for our own sakes and the cause of humanity to reciprocate her friendly sentiments toward us.

Practically all Western nations were free to profit from the new opportunities created by Russia in Eastern Asia, and it was up to the United States not to lag:

Russia carries on the war in central Asia, and colonizes in northern China and the isles of Japan, thus making *points d'appui* for future movements, either political or commercial, with those great centers of population and wealth. All the nations are looking in the same direction, and I therefore call the attention of our government once more to the necessity of our now having some formidable standpoint in the seas bordering on Japan and China, where our armies and navies may rest secure.<sup>2</sup>

Clay urged his compatriots to exercise the greatest judgment possible in selecting such a base. The stakes, he said were high. "I think our future relations, commercial and political, with Eastern Asia and the adjacent isles will be so important as to make us very vigilant in now laying there the bases of future power and security."<sup>3</sup> The island of Kinashi, near Japan, was recommended by the Kentuckian as a likely place, and better yet, Port Hamilton or Nanki, a fine harbor, one of the world's best in fact. "We ought at once to seize and hold that island . . . we have great interests in the Asiatic Seas."<sup>4</sup> In 1868 Cassius Marcellus Clay wrote as if before his mental eye the bloody weeks and months of 1941-42 were unfolding:

<sup>2</sup>Clay to Seward, April 17, 1868, *Papers Relating to Foreign Affairs, Accompanying the Annual Message of the President, to the Third Session, Fortieth Congress*, Part I, Washington, 1869, pp. 469-70; James Rood Robertson, *A Kentuckian at the Court of the Tsars, the Ministry of Cassius Marcellus Clay to Russia, 1861, 1862 and 1863-1869*, Berea College, Kentucky, 1935, pp. 246-47.

<sup>3</sup>Clay to Seward, May 23, 1868, Robertson, *A Kentuckian at the Court of the Tsars*, p. 243.

<sup>4</sup>Clay to Seward, October 27, 1867, *ibid.*, p. 247.

"Great events are in the future in connection with China, Japan, and India. Nature has placed us in a position of mastery of the situation. It will be our fault if we come not up to our possible destiny."<sup>4</sup>

To Prince Alexander Gorchakov, the Tsar's foreign minister, Clay said that the Far East held room for both Russians and Americans. He reminded the Prince that Eastern Asia comprised "vast countries yet to be opened up in a land where, for ages, the wealth of the world has accumulated." He assured St. Petersburg officialdom of America's goodwill. He promised action: "The merchants of the United States, whose interests are reciprocally identified with those of Russia for all time in this joint line, are fully awake to the importance of early and efficient action in this matter."<sup>5</sup>

## II

The line, of which Clay wrote, was the telegraph proposed by the Western Union Company to connect America with Europe by way of Siberia. Perry McDonough Collins, United States agent in Eastern Asia, conceived the idea and did much preparatory work of travel and research across Siberia. He first proposed the line in the middle 1850's, and the heads of the Western Union Company were attracted to his project, particularly after the failure of the Atlantic cable in 1858. At the start the Russian government was slow to co-operate, but in the autumn of 1862 the Tsar's Minister of Communications, the old and quarrelsome General Constantin Chevkin, was replaced by General Paul Melnikov, who had journeyed in the United States and liked Americans. Collins came to Russia, and the new minister told him that the Tsar's government would not be averse to "granting the desired privilege for a telegraph line by way of the Aleutian Islands to the mouth of the Amur River." Melnikov said to Collins that all he wanted to know beforehand was "the length of time necessary to construct the line, the term for which the exclusive privilege would be required, and the conditions of transmitting dispatches over the connecting Russian lines."<sup>6</sup> Still, nothing was done, until the spring of 1863 when Clay, on his return to St. Petersburg from the States, became the main moving spirit of the enterprise.

<sup>4</sup>Clay to Seward, September 17, 1868, *ibid.*, p. 247.

<sup>5</sup>Clay to Gorchakov, December 14, 1864, *Papers Relating to Foreign Affairs . . . First Session, Thirty-ninth Congress, Part II*, Washington, 1866, p. 372.

<sup>6</sup>Robertson, p. 218.

In May, 1863, the Kentuckian held conferences with General Ignatiev, chief of the Asiatic department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. According to Clay, the conversations were long and confidential, covering "the commercial, intellectual, and political" implications of the telegraph project, "in which we both cordially agreed." The agreement was that the Russians would extend their line from Omsk to Nikolayevsk at the Amur mouth in Eastern Siberia within three years, the Americans stringing their wire from Nikolayevsk to San Francisco in about the same time. A route alternate to the one along the Aleutian chain might be across the Bering Sea, although General Ignatiev had his doubts about the difficulties presented by the wild terrain and sea in that more northerly direction. Emperor Alexander II appointed a special committee to consider other details, and the gentlemen raised objections over the control which the Western Union might obtain over the Indian tribes of Alaska and the Aleutians, at that time still a Russian territory. The Emperor signed the charter nevertheless, and Clay was jubilant in his report to Washington:

There is no estimating the results of this union of all continents in commercial, political, and moral intelligence; its influence upon the peace, the development, the civilization and the union of the nations. I cannot but regard it as an illustrious era in the history of the world. I congratulate myself that my mission at this Court has been signalized by an event so auspicious to our country and mankind.<sup>8</sup>

But even the Emperor's signature did not seem to open the way to actual construction. Since part of the line had to cross British Columbia, Collins had to go to London to secure the necessary permission. The mission successfully completed, Collins again visited St. Peterburg. This was in the fall of 1864. The Americans had by then sold all or most of the stock issued for the enterprise, and had bought much of the construction material needed for the line. Hiram Sibley, President of Western Union, joined Collins in St. Petersburg, and in November, 1864, Clay presented the two, first to Prince Gorchakov, then to Emperor Alexander II.

<sup>8</sup>Clay to Seward, May 19, 1863, *Papers Relating to Foreign Affairs . . . First Session of the Thirty-eighth Congress*, Part II, 1864, p. 791. General Ignatiev, with whom Clay negotiated, must have been Count Nicholas Ignatiev, who in 1858-59 carried out an important mission to Central Asia, in 1859 came as the Tsar's envoy to Peking, securing for Russia the advantageous treaty of the next year, and in 1864 was appointed envoy to Turkey. He knew his Asia.

<sup>9</sup>Clay to Seward, June 17, 1863, Robertson, p. 220.

While the Russians continued to delay the final confirmation of the agreement, the Americans conceived of an even wider service that the new line might render. On December 2, 1864, Clay forwarded to Prince Gorchakov a memorandum by Collins proposing "to extend the Russian portion of the line into China, and at some future time, perhaps, into Japan, and other countries lying in that direction." The Western Union had the money, it was asserted, to finish that branch within one year. Clay asked Gorchakov's aid in inducing the Chinese government to grant the Americans the necessary concession. His request was no doubt motivated by the fact that Russia's prestige was high in the Far East so soon after the Russo-Chinese treaties of 1858-60, which gave the Tsar the Amur and Ussuri lands and the opportunity to found Vladivostok. Surely the Chinese would not dare to refuse if the Russians asked them to give the Americans the needed charter. The Kentuckian, himself quite anti-British, and plainly wishing to play upon the anti-British feelings of the Tsar's government, referred to an English project of connecting India with China. He suggested to the Prince that "the commercial intelligence of those vast, populous and wealthy regions must not be permanently diverted from the Russian line, which is the natural route to western Europe." Shrewdly he evoked a gloomy prospect: If England built her line from India to China, "the dispatches from China will reach Europe by a route avoiding the Russian line altogether." Once more he reminded: "The interests of Russia and America in the project of the Western Union are identical."<sup>9</sup>

A few weeks earlier, Clay had asked Seward to instruct Anson Burlingame, United States envoy in Peking, to the same effect. Burlingame was to procure a charter for Sibley and Collins from the Chinese authorities, and to that end he was to cooperate with the Tsar's representative in Peking. Seward approved and "lost no time in addressing to Mr. Burlingame in the spirit of your propositions."<sup>10</sup> No wonder Collins was enthusiastic about Clay. That winter, in St. Petersburg, Collins felt that it was thanks to Clay that "Russia will stand as the intermediary between Europe and America, uniting them with China and Japan through northern Asia." Yes, Clay's part in the epoch-making project was truly precious: "You have

<sup>9</sup>*Papers Relating to Foreign Affairs . . . First Session, Thirty-ninth Congress, Part II, 1866*, pp. 370-72.

<sup>10</sup>Clay to Seward, November 14, 1864, and Seward to Clay, December 13, 1864, *ibid.*, pp. 363 and 365.

been a co-worker and advocate in this great undertaking."<sup>11</sup>

Finally, in the spring of 1865, Clay triumphantly informed Seward that the charter to Collins was at last confirmed, becoming "the law of the land" which no one could dispute or delay in execution. "I congratulate you," he wrote with his customary flourish, "upon this auspicious result, which marks a new era in the inter-communications of the nations, and which must greatly promote the civilization of our race, and tend to bind all to keep the peace of the world."<sup>12</sup>

The Western Union went ahead with redoubled energy. Parties of experienced explorers and linesmen were sent all the way from New Westminster in British Columbia, which was the starting point for the Russian-American telegraph, across the Bering Sea and to the mouth of the Amur. Among others things, the Americans proved to their satisfaction that the Anadyr River in Siberia could be navigated for 250 miles inland. Practically everywhere they found an abundance of timber and willing labor for their purposes.<sup>13</sup> But lo, the anti-climax!

In the spring of 1867, Seward drily advised Clay that the Western Union had decided to suspend its work on the telegraph, giving as its reason the success of the Atlantic cable. There was no longer a possibility of commercial profit from the Russian-American telegraph by way of Alaska and Siberia, and the Western Union felt that its first duty was to its stockholders. However, at least part of the investment and goodwill might be salvaged, should the Russian government take over the Asiatic part of the construction job and carry it through to some point in Alaska, to which spot, then, the Western Union would bring its line. Seward wrote that Clay could broach this proposal to the Russian government but was pessimistic about the result in view of "certain negotiations between Russia and the United States, with regard to Russian America," then pending in Washington.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>11</sup>Collins to Clay, November 28, 1864, *ibid.*, pp. 370-71.

<sup>12</sup>Clay to Seward, March 24, 1865, *ibid.*, p. 370.

<sup>13</sup>*Message of the President of the United States and Accompanying Documents to the Two Houses of Congress at the Commencement of the Second Session of the Fortieth Congress*, Part I, Washington, 1868, p. 386. Among the men traveling and working for the projected line was George Kennan, who later shocked Americans and set many of them against the Tsarist government by his graphic accounts of the Siberian prison and exile system.

<sup>14</sup>Seward to Clay, March 28, 1867, *ibid.*, p. 385.

So died the grandiose idea of the telegraph, and so came the sale of Alaska.

The sale of Alaska was a great surprise to Clay. Seward had completed the entire transaction through Edouard Stoeckl, the Tsar's minister in Washington, without letting in the Kentuckian at St. Petersburg on a single phase of the important negotiations. There might have been several reasons for this. The sale of Alaska was thought to be a blow to England and France, and Clay himself tried to excuse Seward's impoliteness toward him: "If you had given time and publicity to your movements I have no doubt you would have had most energetic protests, if not positive armed intervention to prevent it."<sup>15</sup> Seward, however, might have feared Clay and his anti-British indiscretions more than he feared England and France themselves. Had Clay known of the negotiations about the sale of Alaska, he would have certainly crowded on the subject all over St. Petersburg, and his crowing would have been delightedly anti-British—enough to arouse the British, even if they were not too disturbed in the first place.

Still, Clay tried to claim at least some of the credit for Seward's brilliant stroke. On first hearing of the sale, he hailed "the strange and unexpected good alliance between Russia and America," and added: "I have done all I could here to bring about this most desirable result."<sup>16</sup> A year later his claim was more definite and energetic: "I was in favor of that purchase, as you know, from the beginning and I may safely say that it was owing to the good relations which I have been able to maintain with Russia that such a purchase was possible."<sup>17</sup>

At that, there was some validity to the claim. With all his indiscretions and eccentricities, Cassius Marcellus Clay was the best possible envoy America could have had for the time and the place. In order to appreciate this we must now have a broad yet brief view of Clay's life and career as a whole.

### III

Cassius Marcellus Clay was born on October 19, 1810, in Kentucky, into a family of Scotch, English, and Welsh ancestry.<sup>18</sup> His

<sup>15</sup>Clay to Seward, May 10, 1867, *ibid.*, pp. 390-91.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 391.

<sup>17</sup>Clay to Seward, June 25, 1868, Robertson, p. 235.

<sup>18</sup>For Clay's general biography see *The Life of Cassius Marcellus Clay; Memoirs, Writings, and Speeches, Showing his Conduct in the Overthrow of American Slavery, the Salvation of the Union, and the Restoration of the Autonomy of the*

father, Green Clay, had moved from his native Virginia to the Kentucky frontier in search of a fortune, which he found by shrewd dealing in virgin land. From his father, a legislator and military man, Cassius acquired a fondness for politics and war. Henry Clay, the famous statesman of the time, was a distant relative who called the youngster "Cousin Cash," and who in turn was on many occasions followed and emulated by young Cassius. But in his general love of adventure, particularly in his unorthodox shifts to the unusual in politics, in his outbursts of temper, and his predilection for the fair sex, he did not seem to take after anyone, but was Cassius Marcellus Clay in the original.

According to his own testimony, he fell in love early and often, as a boy and youth, while attending a series of schools in Kentucky. He was in frequent fights and other escapades, and so a family of neighbors moved West when Cassius paid attention to their young daughter—he seemed to have been that dangerous and undesirable. He courted another girl at the same time—Mary Jane Warfield, of the Maryland Warfields (perhaps a collateral ancestor of Wallis Warfield of Baltimore, now the Duchess of Windsor). In 1831, at the age of twenty-one, he journeyed to Yale, on the way introducing himself to President Andrew Jackson in Washington, who received him civilly despite the youth's kinship to his enemy Henry Clay; also meeting Philadelphia's "Ingersolls, Biddles, and other distinguished families, who left no impression upon me."<sup>19</sup>

At Yale he heard William Lloyd Garrison, and was impressed. One speech was enough to convert young Cassius to abolitionism—a sensational phenomenon, indeed, when one thinks of the many slaves owned by the Clay clan in Kentucky. "I then resolved . . . I would give slavery a death struggle."<sup>20</sup> In reality, despite Clay's memoirs, this was no sudden conversion. In an earlier document he wrote that even in 1830, before going to Yale, he had decided to free his slaves at some future day and had joined the Emancipation Society.<sup>21</sup>

In 1832, on returning to Kentucky, Clay married Mary Jane

*States . . . Written and Compiled by Himself*, Vol. I, Cincinnati, 1886 (two volumes were promised, but Volume II never appeared). There are also sketches of his and his father's lives by E. Merton Coulter in *Dictionary of American Biography*, Vol. IV, 1930, pp. 169-70 and 172-73.

<sup>19</sup>*The Life of Cassius Marcellus Clay*, p. 50.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 57.

<sup>21</sup>Cassius M. Clay, *To the People of Kentucky* (pamphlet), Lexington, Ky., 1845, p. 2.

Warfield. An unsuccessful rival for her affections, a young physician, was supposed to have stated certain unflattering things about Cassius, and so, on the day before his marriage, Clay caned the man publicly. Soon afterward, the luckless doctor committed suicide. Blithely, Clay proceeded with his new business of politics as well as the old pursuit of fighting.

In all his campaigns Cassius carried two pistols and a bowie knife. In 1835 he was elected to the Kentucky state legislature; the next year he was defeated, but in 1837, and again in 1840, he returned to that body. In 1841, disregarding Henry Clay's fond advice, he ran and was defeated—now on the clear-cut issue of slavery. That year he fought a duel with a political rival who had incautiously mentioned Mary Jane's name in a speech. In 1845 another politician took a shot at Clay, but the bullet struck the scabbard of Clay's knife right over his heart. Cassius so cut up the assailant with his bowie blade that he was indicted for mayhem, and it took Henry Clay's effort as his attorney to free "Cousin Cash."

Henry Clay acted not only as a relative, but also to repay a political debt. The year before Henry had been the Whig candidate for the White House, and Cassius had stumped the country for him, everywhere "received with the wildest enthusiasm—from Ohio to Boston," in the latter place sharing the platform with Daniel Webster himself! Henry Clay lost the campaign of 1844 to James Knox Polk, the Democrat, but Cassius Clay emerged a national figure. Horace Greeley was now his friend, and other abolitionists, rank and file, flocked to marvel at this abolitionist from Kentucky, this Southerner who aligned himself "squarely with the political interests of the North."<sup>22</sup>

More renown came to Cassius as in June, 1845, he started a hard-hitting abolitionist newspaper in Lexington which he called *The True American*, arming the offices beforehand with rifles, lances, two cannon, and a keg of powder. In August, a Committee of Sixty, among them some of his relatives, took advantage of his temporary absence from the city and seized his plant. Boxing and insuring the press and other equipment, the Lexingtonians shipped it to Cincinnati, where abolitionists promptly held a meeting and elected a committee to greet Cassius and his paper most heartily. The next year the annexation of Texas was followed by a war with Mexico, and although Clay had opposed the fracas he now volunteered, fought bravely, and was taken prisoner (January, 1847). He had

<sup>22</sup>*The Life of Cassius Marcellus Clay*, p. 94.

many adventures during the campaign and in prison, and he found Mexican girls "the loveliest of women," particularly one Lulu, with whom he seemed to have had an affair despite his married state.<sup>23</sup> He came back to Kentucky a hero, greeted by the state legislature, and presented with a sword by his fellow citizens. In 1850 the returned hero killed young Cyrus Turner, the son of a political opponent. In the fight Clay himself was seriously wounded, and, as Turner had forgiven him before dying, Clay was not prosecuted after his own recovery.

Such was the man who in 1856 joined the newly born Republican party, who in 1860 vigorously campaigned for Lincoln, and in 1861 was rewarded with the ministry to Russia.

Even on the way to St. Petersburg, in April, 1861, as he was passing through the ill-defended and much-threatened Washington, he paused long enough to rally clerks, office-seekers, and other miscellaneous Republicans into the Clay Battalion to hold the capital until better troops arrived from the north.<sup>24</sup> He came back from Russia in the summer of 1862, did some fighting in his country's Civil War, agitated for an immediate freeing of Negroes in the seceded states, and helped create the sentiment that was finally responsible for Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation of September 22. In the spring of 1863 he again sailed for Russia where he served for six more years.

Having returned to the States in 1869, Clay sent for a Russian boy whom he named Launey and called his adopted son. He would not tell the boy's parentage which to this day remains a mystery. Mary Jane Clay had returned to America early in 1862, against her husband's wish, he said. Believing various scandal about him, she refused to rejoin Cassius forever after. In 1878 they were divorced. The year before, Cassius, discovering or imagining a plot against himself and Launey, killed a Negro, the son of his discharged cook. He was acquitted. By that time he had fallen out with fellow-Republicans and was a Democrat; he "went back on his record," his enemies wrote, "and now curses the North as roundly as the most red-hot unreconstructed rebel dare."<sup>25</sup> But in 1884 he was again a Republican, voting for Blaine. He also founded Berea College, for both whites and blacks, a truly liberal school at various times in its

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 159-63.

<sup>24</sup>Margaret Leech, *Reveille in Washington, 1860-1865*, New York, 1941, pp. 57-58.

<sup>25</sup>*The Life of Cassius Marcellus Clay*, p. 556.

changing career.

Cassius Marcellus Clay died in 1903, at the ripe age of ninety-three. Shortly before his death he married an adolescent girl, barricaded his ancestral White Hall with artillery, defying his real or suspected foes to take the new wife away from him, but soon divorced the girl. Amid his last adventures and difficulties he was legally adjudged insane.

It was a long and full life, indeed.

#### IV

And yet he was the proper man to represent this country in Russia in the 1860's.

True, there are legends now in Kentucky that not all the Russians appreciated Clay. It is told, in tones of amusement, how in those distant 60's he would offend certain noblemen at the Tsar's court by flirting with their women; how they would challenge him to duels, giving him the choice of weapons; and how he puzzled them by naming the bowie knife.

He was in serious trouble with the secretary of his legation, Jeremiah Curtin, an Irish-American from Wisconsin. He started out by praising Curtin for his perfect knowledge of the Russian language. When first presented to Alexander II, the young secretary spoke in Russian; "to this fact, so rare here, the Emperor alluded last night, and said Mr. Curtin pronounced Russian like a native."<sup>26</sup> Even a year later Clay and Curtin traveled together to Moscow to receive honors from the Mayor and citizens of that city, and Cassius wrote back to Washington: "Much of the good feeling existing towards this legation is owing to the character and merits of Mr. Curtin, who has learned the Russian language and speaks it fluently, in which he delivered his speech in Moscow, to the delight of all Russia. He is a great acquisition to this legation and deserves well of the country."<sup>27</sup>

Thus encouraged, the young man delivered a few more speeches. As time passed, their success proved to be too much for Clay, and the Minister finally turned against the Secretary. Beginning with late in 1867, Clay in his jealousy of Curtin's success, accused the

<sup>26</sup>Clay to Seward, January 24, 1865, *Papers Relating to Foreign Affairs . . . First Session, Thirty-ninth Congress*, Part II, 1866, p. 368.

<sup>27</sup>Clay to Seward, February 6, 1866, *Papers Relating to Foreign Affairs . . . Second Session, Thirty-ninth Congress*, Part I, 1867, p. 392.

young man of drunkenness, non-payment of debts, and general worthlessness. Curtin indignantly denied the charges, and, not to be outdone, revealed a few things about Clay. He said that, for the diplomatic service in the matter of the American-Asiatic telegraph, Clay had received from Collins and Sibley a quantity of stock in the company, to wit: \$30,000 worth of paid-up shares for himself, from \$300,000 to \$400,000 to be distributed among Russian officials as reward for their helpful attitude, and an unspecified number of shares to be sold in Russia. Curtin charged that Clay had hastened to sell his own stock to some Russian acquaintances, and that later, when the enterprise fell through, at least one of the purchasers had demanded but had failed to get his money back from Clay.<sup>28</sup>

Another grave charge was brought against Clay early in 1866 by Eliza Leonard Chautems, the Irish wife of a Swiss-French resident of St. Petersburg. She said he had tried to attack her first, then her young daughter. Clay countered that the accusation was absurd. "She was over forty years old, with chronic bronchitis . . . with a most offensive breath . . . even had she been virtuous, she was decidedly *passée*!" He had never touched her, he said, nor her daughter, "a handsome, but very immature girl," despite the fact that the mother was "doing her best . . . to sell her daughter's chastity."<sup>29</sup> Clay represented the whole matter as an attempt at blackmail, and possibly he was right. Russian authorities, at any rate, came to his aid with documents establishing the woman's bad record.

Nevertheless, Secretary of State Seward was annoyed, and not by these squabbles alone. For years he suffered Clay's long communications of advice to him and Lincoln not only on Russian affairs but also on the conduct of war and politics in the United States. If Clay continued to stay in Russia because Lincoln himself wanted him there, the question arises: Why was he allowed to keep his post four long years after Lincoln's death? A possible answer is that Seward and his group were running into enough trouble at home with their reconstruction policies, and Clay was sure to add to the tempest were he recalled from St. Petersburg. Besides, unlike many other American ministers in Russia, Cassius clung to his post. When in December, 1867, Seward finally cabled to Clay that his resignation would be accepted (this without Clay's offering to resign!), Cassius refused to

<sup>28</sup>*Memoirs of Jeremiah Curtin*, edited with notes and introduction by Joseph Schafer, Madison, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1940, pp. 7-25 and 174-78.

<sup>29</sup>*The Life of Cassius Marcellus Clay*, p. 465.

leave. He stayed for almost two more years, and then came home—to denounce Seward, to quarrel with Seward's successor, Hamilton Fish, and to say nasty things about President Grant, too.

And yet, there is enough evidence that despite his eccentricities and shortcomings both Seward and Prince Gorchakov, one acting in the best interests of America, the other desirous of Russia's good, wanted Clay at his post for a long time.

As Clay himself aptly remarked, "the Russians of the higher class are more like Southerners, than the Southerners are like the Northerners."<sup>80</sup> So here he was, a Southerner representing the Northern cause amid the pomp and glitter and the strange, reforming, idealistic air of St. Petersburg in the 1860's. He liked his new surroundings immensely, for not only was he in an exotic land, but also he felt himself an aristocrat among aristocrats at a time when they tried to be mankind's limited benefactors by giving their serfs and slaves freedom on their, the aristocrats', own terms. The Russians liked him because Clay entertained lavishly and flattered them sincerely. He was eccentric and amorous and on occasion in trouble, but so were many of the Tsar's officials and nobles. They understood him. If there was anything in his nature that was queer or curious to them, well, he was an American, wasn't he? A certain amount of overseas quaintness, of frontier contrariness, was expected of him.

Seward stood him as long as he did because lusty Clay was an expansionist, like himself. Prince Gorchakov, the Tsar's foreign minister, nodded pleasantly because Clay promised America's approval and support to Russian expansion in Asia; but above all because Clay was bitterly anti-British at a time when Russia sought and schemed revenge for the ten-year old Crimean disaster at the hands of Britain.

It is difficult to explain in their entirety all the many reasons for Clay's anglophobia, but chief among them was his Kentuckian origin. It was in Kentucky that the "war-hawk" tradition of 1812, of dislike for New England's pro-Britishism, of wanting to fight Britain and seize Canada, lingered for decades afterwards and influenced the Clay clan so largely. (Henry Clay used to boast that Kentucky militia alone could take Canada.) In the early 1860's wily Seward needed and used this anti-British bitterness of Cassius, but at the close of the decade it was no longer useful—the Confederacy was by then defeated, England failing to come to its assistance; Alaska was added to America's possessions, London diplomats suffering a setback

<sup>80</sup>/bid., p. 50.

in the North Pacific. Time neared for a peaceful understanding with Britain, even if she continued her differences with Russia.

Seventeen years later, while the Anglo-American amity was a solid fact, England and Russia were more than ever on the verge of a war. In his ancestral Kentucky home the aging ex-envoy was pessimistic:

Can England much oftener, or much longer, submit to such life-struggles? Again, the subject people of the East can not fail to see that, while Russia assimilates her conquered subjects, England enslaves hers. . . . If England could move all her wealth to India, and there establish her central power, assimilating Indians and Chinese under one great consolidated empire, giving up her islands to Ireland and her insatiate European rivals, she might survive indefinitely. Otherwise, it is but a question of time when 'she must go!' <sup>81</sup>

Only America could—and perhaps should—settle the argument between Russia and England by establishing her own firm position in Asia:

The rivalry of Russia and England may be said to be hereditary, if not natural. Besides the many life-struggles of the two powers, their positions as to India, China, and all Eastern Asia, and Japan, are essentially antagonistic; and no third power is likely to intervene in the final settlement, unless it might be the United States, from her western shores, and through the Pacific Ocean.<sup>82</sup>

To establish a Russo-American connection via the Pacific, to introduce the United States into Eastern Asia as a decisive, peaceful factor—such was Clay's work in Russia in the 1860's. Had the telegraph project succeeded (and, as we saw, it almost succeeded), the United States would have played an earlier and more important rôle in Asia—and Clay's work would have been recognized. There is no doubt that, although full of annoyance, Clay's letters did influence Seward, or at least strengthened Lincoln's Secretary of State in his plans to establish America in the North Pacific, enroute to Asia. Those letters, as well as Clay's good relations with the Tsar's court, doubtless paved the way for the sale of Alaska.

As time went by, and as Seward was not only forgiven his "folly" of buying that "ice-box" from the Russians but even received the increasing praise of America's press and orators, Clay felt more

<sup>81</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 445-46.

<sup>82</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 294.

and more neglected and not given his due. At first he did not claim too much, admitting right after the sale that Seward's secrecy in closing the deal took him "with a most agreeable surprise." But even then Clay trusted that his activities in St. Petersburg "aided indirectly in this final cession." He recalled:

My attention was first called to this matter in 1863, when I came over the Atlantic, with the Hon. R. J. Walker, upon whom I impressed the importance of our ownership of the western coast of the Pacific in connection with the vast trade which was springing up with China and Japan and the western islands. He told me that the Emperor Nicholas was willing to give us Russian America if we would close up our coast possessions to 54° 40'. . . . Since then, in connection with the necessity of our owning one end of a European telegraph line, quite independently of England, I have talked with and I have urged the Russian authorities in a private way to put privileges of the Hudson's Bay Company, to sublet them by the Russian American Company, in our hands. . . .<sup>33</sup>

Up to 1865 Hudson's Bay Company indeed had leased privileges in Alaska, and we have more than Clay's own testimony that he sought those for the United States. A Russian document of the ministry of finance, dated 1866, states that Clay "verbally offered to pay annually a larger sum for the mainland [of Alaska] than the Hudson's Bay Company was paying for it." A modern Soviet commentator adds that Clay also suggested that in case of refusal he was ready to negotiate for those islands off Alaska which the British company had not leased.<sup>34</sup>

At the age of eighty-five, enraged by the tribute then paid to Seward's memory, Cassius Clay went to Berea to announce: "I claim the honor of the annexation of Alaska." He now misrepresented his negotiations of 1866 on leasing Alaskan lands, asserting: "I then urged them to sell the whole of Alaska to the United States." Shame on Seward, "the man who came in opposition to me for the honor of the annexation of Alaska"! Clay ranted and raved, and at length

<sup>33</sup>Clay to Seward, May 10, 1867, *Message of the President of the United States and Accompanying Documents . . . Second Session of the Fortieth Congress, Part I*, 1868, pp. 390-91. "The Hon. R. J. Walker," mentioned by Clay, was the same gentleman who participated in certain obscure dealings behind the sale of Alaska and received \$26,000 from Stoeckl for "facilitating" the transaction. See Wm. A. Dunning, "Paying for Alaska," *Political Science Quarterly*, v. 27, September 1912, pp. 385-98.

<sup>34</sup>S. B. Okun', *Rossiysko-Amerikanskaya Kompaniya*, edited by B. D. Grekov, Moscow-Leningrad, pp. 234-35.

dosed his speech with this promise: "My executors shall be instructed if they raise a monument—and I do not care for these things—to write on it ALASKA and my name."<sup>35</sup>

Actually he should have requested "Alaska" in smaller letters and in a secondary place. First on his monument should have been his words of the 1860's applauding Russia's expansion into Asia as opening the way for the United States—to "some formidable stand-point in the seas bordering on Japan and China, where our armies and navies may rest secure." For, in a sense, Cassius Marcellus Clay was a better prophet than he himself in his supreme egotism ever imagined. A better prophet, we say, even if the prophecy itself is but on the way to complete fulfillment.

<sup>35</sup>*Oration of Cassius Marcellus Clay Before Students and Historical Class of Berea College, Berea, Ky., October 16, 1895* (pamphlet), Richmond, Ky., 1896, pp. 3, 7, 8, and 10.

# Modern Science In Russia \*

By V. N. IPATIEFF

## I

JUST as rays of the sun are distributed to all men, rich and poor, good and evil, so also scientific ideas, new discoveries, and inventions serve all humanity. Modern means of transportation and communication between nations make every great invention the property of the entire world, and foes, as well as friends, of the country where the invention was originally made soon use it.

Great discoveries are in many cases made simultaneously by scientists in different countries. By discussing important research done in Russia there is no intention of claiming exclusiveness or absolute priority for Russians in the fields under consideration. I am simply emphasizing the fact that Russia has always generously contributed her share to the science of the world.

Large scale development of science in Russia dates less than one hundred years back. I must point out, however, that as early as two hundred years ago one of the world's greatest scientists lived in Russia. He was M. V. Lomonosov, a peasant's son, whose ideas and research on the conservation of matter and energy preceded by decades the discoveries of Lavoisier, Joule, and others, but whose works were not known to the world because they were written in Latin and were not published. In collaboration with his colleague, Academician G. Richmann, he verified Franklin's explanations of electrical phenomena in nature, and it was during an experiment of this character that Richmann was killed. The genius of Lomonosov may be compared only with that of Leonardo da Vinci.

Lomonosov was not the first scientist who lived and worked in Russia. By his time science and the arts were developed there in a way that could be expected from a comparatively young nation. The countries bordering on Russia, such as Germany, have always kept in close touch with her scientific development, and we find that as early as 1828 Ph. Strahl published in Leipzig a 514-page book entitled, *Das gelehrte Russland*, although a glance at the index shows that much material is missing which should have been included in a modern study of this type. These countries, moreover, also exerted

\* This article surveys Russian scientific contributions in the fields of chemistry, physics, metallurgy, radio telegraphy, and aeronautics. [Ed.]

their influence on Russian scientific work and in turn were benefited by it. Although the influence of the United States on the industry of Russia has been felt increasingly in recent years, Russian chemical literature still quotes largely German sources. Likewise, many Russian researches were known in this country only as they were published in German scientific journals, and their authors were not always recognized as Russians.

It may be of interest to mention that men like Friedrich Beilstein, William Ostwald, and Tammann, were born in Russia or started their careers in Russia; they worked in the Russian Academy of Sciences or Russian universities for many years, and Ostwald and Tammann were afterwards invited to go to Germany.

An era of more vigorous advancement of science in Russia began in the fifties and sixties of the nineteenth century, when a series of liberal reforms were carried out in Russia through the initiative of Tsar Alexander II. Like a sponge, Russia started to absorb the advancements in science made in the West. Many young and even older people went abroad for study and specialization in the sciences, especially in natural sciences, such as physics, chemistry, physiology, etc. The movement to pursue these studies frequently took the form of an opposition to the government's attempts to distract the youth from socialist ideas by centering the system of education in the gymnasiums around the study of ancient languages.

Contact with Western science became a great stimulus to the development of the sciences in Russia. Although a young country, with negligible means for the realization of new scientific ideas in her laboratories, she was not slow in demonstrating the great potential strength of Russian genius and the ability to create "her own Newtons." The laboratories in which these researches were carried out could in no way be compared with the palaces of science that already had been erected in Europe, which I saw myself in the nineties when I was sent abroad for advanced study in chemistry.

What kind of people were the pioneers of science in Russia, and whence did they come?

When praying to God, the Russian always turns to the east. Let us likewise turn to the east. There, in the city of Kazan on the Volga, a galaxy of Russian scientists were born whose names were perpetuated in the memories of the entire world by their outstanding discoveries. Suffice it to mention the names of Lobachevsky, Zinin, Butlerov, Markovnikov, M. Konovalov and Mendeleev (the last of these was born still farther east, in the city of Tobolsk in Siberia).

A few words should be said about the scientific works of each

of these men. Lobachevsky created a new non-Euclidian geometry. Zinin's research in organic chemistry enabled him to demonstrate for the first time that nitrocompounds may easily be reduced to amines such as aniline. The well-known German scientist, Hoffmann, who developed the field of organic dyes, stated in a speech that "the discovery of this reaction is of sufficient merit to inscribe the name of Zinin into the history of chemistry in gold letters."

Butlerov was a student of Zinin, and simultaneously with Kekulé worked on the development of the theory of organic compounds. The school of Russian organic chemists who were his students enriched science by their remarkable studies of aliphatic compounds in general and hydrocarbons in particular. One of his students, A. E. Favorsky, an outstanding and very well known chemist still active in the U.S.S.R., was my first teacher in chemistry and thus I am, in the scientific sense, a grandson of the memorable Butlerov. Butlerov's student, V. Markovnikov, pursued studies on Russian petroleum oils through which his name has become known to almost every American chemist working in the petroleum industry. As far as Mendeleev is concerned, his genius is known to every student who has had as much as an introductory course in chemistry. Markovnikov's student, M. T. Konovalov, may be regarded as the originator of synthesis of nitroparaffins at the close of the nineteenth century.

## II

Not only in pure science, but in applied sciences as well, Russian workers have exerted an enormous influence on the development of various branches of industry. I would like to point out first of all the research of Professor D. Chernov on the structure of steel and its thermal treatment. It was Chernov who indicated for the first time how steel should be thermally treated to withstand high pressures, such as are encountered in artillery guns. The change from bronze to steel guns could be materialized only after Chernov's research at the Obukhov plant in St. Petersburg. Chernov's discovery is valued by the metallurgists of the entire world, and Professor Henry Marion Howe of Columbia University wrote the following dedication note on the first page of his book, *Iron, Steel and Other Alloys*, published in Boston in 1903:

"To my friend Professor Dimitry Constantin [ovich] Tchernoff, the father of the metallurgy of iron, as a token of affectionate esteem this work is dedicated."

The significance of cracking of oil requires no explanation. It is noteworthy that the Russian engineer Shukhov preceded Burton by publishing a study and patenting a process of cracking oil under pressure.

Preparation of aromatic hydrocarbons from petroleum constitutes one of the most important problems of modern chemical research. It will, therefore, be of interest to point out that as early as 1877 Letny pyrolyzed oil in the presence of carbon and platinized carbon for the purpose of increasing the content of aromatics in the charge. Pyrolysis of oil for the purpose of preparing aromatics was also studied by Rudnev (1881), Nikiforov (1896), and Zelinsky (1915).

The first contact method of preparation of sulfuric acid in the presence of a platinum catalyst carried on pumice was demonstrated at the Tentelev Chemical Plant in St. Petersburg.

The remarkable reaction of the addition of water to acetylene in the presence of salts of mercury was discovered by Professor M. Kucherov in the eighties of the last century. Little attention was paid to this discovery for a period of thirty years, until, during the First World War, the Germans began to employ this reaction for the preparation of acetic acid and ethyl alcohol.

Just as important are Russian achievements in physics and electrical technology. In 1874, a student of the St. Petersburg University, A. N. Ladygin, experimented with heating metallic wire and small granules of coke by means of electrical current and decided that electricity may be used for illumination purposes. Thus, the first Ladygin electrical lamp was built on this principle. The Imperial Academy of Sciences honored Ladygin with the Lomonosov prize. Simultaneously, Ladygin applied to the Department of Trade and Manufacture for a patent and organized a company for exploiting his invention. Florensov, who later was my professor at the Artillery Academy, and Didrichson, further perfected the Ladygin lamp. In 1875 the Ladygin-Didrichson lamp was demonstrated in Paris and was tested by the famous Gramm, and in Berlin at the Siemens-Halske plant in the same year. Practical use of this lamp was made in 1876 during the construction of the Alexandrovsky bridge over the Neva. Several other Russian scientists also developed electrical lighting devices at about the same time as Ladygin. Notable among them was Paul Yablochkov, whose carbon arc "candle" was commercially produced on a small scale in 1876. Only toward the end of 1878, the American press carried the news of the incandescent lamp invented by Thomas Edison.

Another discovery of paramount importance was made by Alex-

ander Stepanovich Popov, a professor of the Naval Engineering School. This discovery relates to radiotelegraphy, a field that had not yet been explored in his time. Important Russian specialists in this field regard A. S. Popov as the originator of radiotelegraphy. Continuing the researches of Hertz, Popov was finally able to receive very faint electromagnetic waves through long distances, which was sufficient as a means of communication. In 1895, A. S. Popov demonstrated before a large audience at the University of St. Petersburg an apparatus for wireless transmission from the chemical laboratory to the physics lecture room in which he presented his work. I was a very young chemist at that time, but I still retain the vivid impression which the very numerous members of the Physico-Chemical Society received at that historic meeting. Popov further perfected his apparatus and in 1897 he was able to operate transmission stations for a distance of 5 km. Unfortunately for Russian science, A. S. Popov died of heart failure soon thereafter.

I might add that the famous Marconi knew about all of Popov's experiments and published his first papers on radiotelegraphy in 1897.

The question may be asked why Popov's invention was not properly utilized in Russia, while Marconi succeeded in developing his discovery in this field to an extent which gave him universal recognition as the creator of radio transmission. Lord Beaconsfield was asked once what the secret of success was. His answer was, "The great secret of success consists in the ability of grasping the opportune moment." In my opinion, however, this is not the only secret of success. The proper moment can be found for the realization of a discovery or invention only when favorable circumstances exist, and when the government and industry are led by people who are capable of evaluating the discovery made. Poor Popov, in answer to his request for a grant of 35,000 rubles for an experiment to establish a communication line between St. Petersburg and Kronstadt or Moscow, received only 5,000 rubles. Such conditions, of which this incident is typical, are certainly not conducive to the development of research and its transmission into commercial practice.

On the other hand, the electrical industry in Russia was at that time in an embryonic state and did not possess the means for the development of a new branch of electrical technology. Even the incandescent lamps used in Russia were not made in Russian factories, but were supplied by German firms.

It may be of interest to cite an example of the lack of understand-

ing on the part of Russian industrialists of the potentialities offered by the country's resources. Professor D. K. Chernov discovered in Southern Russia an enormous deposit of rock salt. After resigning from the Obukhov steel plant in St. Petersburg, Professor Chernov settled in the South, in the Bakhmut county of Ekaterinoslav province, where he studied the location of the salt deposits and lakes, and explored the salt strata by drilling. For a long time he attempted to persuade industrialists in St. Petersburg and Moscow to subsidize this work and to begin industrial utilization of the salt, but his attempts failed. Because of his compelling energy, he did not drop the project. He turned to foreign firms and enlisted the aid of Dutch capital, by means of which an enormous development of the salt industry in that region soon became a fact.

### III

The beginning of the twentieth century marked the development of catalytic chemical reactions. Simultaneously and independently, new ways were found in France and in Russia which were destined to direct the future development of science as well as technology. It may be said that the era of catalysis was reached in organic synthesis. Immediately, industry started a revision of all previous scientific research in which catalytic phenomena had even been as much as hinted at. These works were studied, and as soon as possible the results were brought into commercial practice. While the French scientist Sabatier studied catalytic hydrogenation of organic substances under the action of reduced nickel, the present author discovered new catalytic reactions, including dehydrogenation, dehydration, polymerization and isomerization. I was able to discover that metal oxides constitute perfect catalysts for many reactions. Furthermore, the enormous significance of the pressure factor in catalytic processes was demonstrated for the first time, and an apparatus known as the "bomb," which permits safe laboratory experiments under several hundred atmospheres pressure, was constructed.

All these discoveries and laboratory research accomplished in Russia served as a basis for the development of new chemical processes from which humanity benefited in peacetime and which are an extreme necessity in modern warfare.

The war of 1914 found Russia completely unprepared, from the chemical point of view. The chemical industry was very limited, and only the most essential chemical products were manufactured in Russia, such as inorganic acids, soda, ammonia, sodium hydroxide,

etc., and of organic compounds, alcohol, glycerine, soaps, and explosives. All dyestuffs, pharmaceuticals, and other organic preparations were imported from Germany. It is true that the government attempted to practice a tariff policy designed to develop the domestic chemical industry, but this was done in a very ineffectual way and hardly remedied the situation.

In spite of the enormous difficulties of organizing new branches of the chemical industry and of assuring the Russian army of a supply of explosives, poison gas, etc., Russian chemists succeeded in constructing, during two or three years of the war, more than twenty plants producing crude benzol from coal coking and pyrolysis of petroleum oil to obtain benzene and toluene in large amounts. A series of plants were built producing sulfuric acid, nitric acid, and explosives.

The success of this work was made possible only by the well founded chemical and technical training received by the Russian chemists and engineers under teachers whose names are known throughout the world, and who created an independent Russian school of chemists.

#### IV

In the post-revolutionary period, a great achievement to the credit of the Soviet Government was the founding of a large number of research institutes designed to serve science as well as industry. It was recognized by the government that without preliminary investigation of physical and chemical processes in the laboratory, no large scale industrial production could be undertaken. In 1921, when the present author took over the management of the institutes (under the supervision of the Scientific-Technical Division of the Supreme Council of National Economy), some of these had a record of activity begun before the Revolution and others were only in the state of formation. For instance, the Institute of Applied Mineralogy was started with a small laboratory founded before the War of 1914, by V. V. Arshinov, who was a son of a rich Moscow merchant greatly interested in collecting minerals and who later became a professor. In his house, Arshinov assembled an interesting collection of minerals and some apparatus for their investigation. Furthermore, he collected a voluminous library on mineralogy. Arshinov offered to the Scientific-Technical Division his laboratory, and thus a new institute was born. A few years later, in 1928-1929, we succeeded in obtaining from the Soviet Government an appropriation for the con-

struction of a research institute of geology and mineralogy and for its equipment in accordance with present day scientific requirements.

In a similar way the Institute of Fertilizers was organized and developed. Soon after the Revolution of 1917, an institute for the study of fertilizers was organized at the initiative of Professor Ya. V. Samoilov in a small private house in Moscow. This institute was also transferred to the jurisdiction of the Scientific-Technical Division. The great importance of research on fertilizers for Russia as an agricultural country required organization of a large institute to cover this field, and after proper presentation to the government a new building for the Institute of Fertilizers was constructed in 1930-1931 along with the Institute of Mineralogy. In a short span of time, the new institute amortized the expenses incurred in its organization. It is sufficient to point out that at this institute methods were developed for manufacturing fertilizers from apatite ores coming from the newly prospected extensive Khibinsk deposits in Lapland, the largest deposits of this mineral in the world. In 1932-1935, this institute also prospected enormous new deposits of phosphorites in Middle Asia in the Kara-Tau mountains. The resources in that locality are not smaller than those in Lapland.

L. Ya. Karpov, a member of the Executive Presidium of the Council of National Economy, took the initiative as early as 1919 in organizing a small laboratory in a private house in Moscow for the purpose of serving the chemical industry. A. N. Bakh, who had returned to Russia from Switzerland, where he had spent most of his life as a political emigré, was engaged to direct the laboratory. It soon became evident that this laboratory could not serve the entire chemical industry, and it was decided in 1920 to build a new laboratory. Despite the great difficulties in construction and the lack of materials, the Karpov Institute was opened in 1921. It was very well equipped, and industry greatly benefited from the research which was carried out there.

The number of state institutes increased each year as the various branches of industry progressed. In the 1920's, some twenty such institutes were already functioning. Furthermore, the industrial trusts (organizations created by the government for the purpose of managing the various industries) also tried wherever possible to organize institutes and laboratories for the control and improvement of their own production.

In 1935 the People's Commissariat for the Heavy Industry published a book describing the research institutes, their objects of study, and the personnel responsible for their work. According to this in-

formation the heavy industry was served by 99 institutes and 27 subordinate divisions.<sup>1</sup> All these institutes are subdivided into two groups. The main (theoretical) institutes were directly responsible to the research department of the Commissariat, while the institutes serving specific branches of industry were subordinated each to the general management of the respective industry.

These institutes were served by a total of 33,380 people, of which 11,189 (33.5 per cent) were scientific personnel; 9,358 (28.1 per cent) technicians, engineers, and laboratory assistants; and 12,833 (38.4 per cent) were classified as service personnel and workers.

For the purpose of preparation of scientific personnel in the U.S.S.R., a school of "aspirants" was founded in each university, research institute, and also in the Academy of Sciences. In 1935, the number of aspirants was 450. The budget of all institutes for 1934 amounted to 269,000,000 Soviet rubles, of which the state appropriated 38,000,000 rubles, the rest being covered in the main by the industry. It is beyond doubt that in the future these research institutes will be of invaluable help in the development of science in the country, as well as in the introduction of new processes and the perfection of old methods used by the industry.

## V

It would be an impossible task to give in this article even a general outline of all the achievements of Soviet science and industry during the twenty-five years of the Soviet Government's existence. Only some of the most pertinent facts may be pointed out. The

<sup>1</sup> Branch	Number of Institutes	Branch Divisions	Total
Physics	6	...	6
Chemistry (including coal Chemistry)	27	5	32
Fuel	5	2	7
Energetics	7	1	8
Electrotechnics	6	...	6
Ferrous Metallurgy	6	...	6
Non-ferrous Metallurgy	5	...	5
Mining	4	10	14
Geology and Geodesy	3	2	5
Machine Building	14	3	17
Building Construction	12	3	15
Organization of Labor	4	1	5
 Total	 99	 27	 126

most outstanding achievement in the field of applied chemistry may be regarded as the industry of nitrogen fixation, which reached a size capable of satisfying both agricultural and military needs. The output of other basic chemical industries also showed a very extensive growth. As for the production of pharmaceuticals and dyes, this proceeds at a slower tempo, which is quite normal, however, in view of the fact that a successful development of these industries requires a long period of training of a whole school of chemists. I recall in this connection a conversation with Trotsky in 1925 in which he asked: "When will we have a dye industry such as the Germans possess?" To which I replied: "If we will develop the dye industry without any assistance, it will require about twenty-five years." "That is a hyperbole!" Trotsky exclaimed.

The pharmaceutical industry greatly benefited by the researches of A. E. Chichibabin, Orekhov, and others in the field of alkaloids.

Toward the end of the 1920's, I. Preobrazhensky discovered large deposits of potassium salts in the province of Perm. The very extensive resources of potassium salts available in U.S.S.R. at the present time are sufficient to cover the entire needs of agriculture as well as the chemical industry.

The necessity of developing a synthetic rubber industry was pointed out by Lenin at the very beginning of the Revolution. This was attempted first by Professor S. Byzov, who prepared butadiene by pyrolysis of oil and polymerized the butadiene in the presence of catalysts. Several years later, in 1928 and 1929, Professor S. V. Lebedev systematically investigated preparation of butadiene from ethyl alcohol under the action of mixed catalysts and increased the yield of this hydrocarbon obtainable by the above method to such an extent that industrial application of the process appeared feasible. About 100,000 tons of butadiene from alcohol are being annually produced at the present time in U.S.S.R.

Furthermore, an extensive investigation of the flora of U.S.S.R. was undertaken, and a number of the most promising rubber-bearing and gutta percha-producing plants was collected (*tau-sagyz*, *kok-sagyz*).

The theory and practical application of various catalytic reactions constitutes a subject of constant study in various institutes of U.S.S.R. Much work on this subject is being done at the Institute of High Pressures by Moldavsky. The research of V. Ipatieff, Jr. on corrosion of metals under pressure and solubility of gases in liquids under pressure, and of A. I. Dintses and A. V. Frost on the application of thermodynamics to the cracking of oil has yielded many valuable

data.

The L. Ya. Karpov Institute of Physical Chemistry also pays much attention to research on catalysis, and valuable data on the theory of catalytic processes were published by A. N. Bakh. A. N. Frumkin is studying electrode processes and surface phenomena. Ya. K. Syrkin is investigating applications of physics to organic chemistry. N. N. Semenov heads the Institute of Chemical Physics and has been responsible for the development of the chain theory of chemical reactions, theories of combustion, and detonation.

Likewise, many important researches in all branches of chemistry were carried out in the universities and technical colleges as early as 1921. Chemists in all countries have noted the researches of N. D. Zelinsky, A. E. Favorsky, Nametkin, Yuriev, and many others.

In the field of physics, the investigations of Professors L. Mandelstam and G. Landsberg may be pointed out. Their observations of the scattering of monochromatic radiation by quartz led to the discovery of the phenomenon known as "the Raman effect." This discovery was made by them almost simultaneously and independently of Raman.

Before the Revolution, no optical glass was produced in Russia. The Optical Institute, the activities of which began in 1918, attracted important scientists, including the Academicians Grebenshchikov, Vavilov, Preobrazhensky, a corresponding member of the Academy Kachalov, and a number of professors. These collaborators of the Optical Institute showed a brilliant performance in solving the problem of production of optical glass. At the present time, this research institute is one of the world's leading institutions in the field of optics with respect to the volume of the work done and the variety of problems studied.

The research of the Academician Kapitza, a student of Rutherford, is known throughout the world. In 1934, Kapitza constructed in his laboratory in Cambridge a machine for liquefying helium. This machine makes it possible to produce very low temperatures with more convenience and without the use of liquid hydrogen for preliminary cooling. A machine of this type is being operated at the present time in U.S.S.R. with the aid of which liquid helium is produced on a commercial scale.

The activities of the Central Aero-Hydrodynamical Institute, which was named after Professor Zhukovsky, must also be mentioned. This institute performed a great service in research on flying. Professor Zhukovsky and his co-workers in the management of the air fleet took the initiative in 1917 in organizing this institute. At that

time the group was known as the "Aviation and Testing Bureau." In 1918, this bureau was reorganized into an institute headed by Zhukovsky and after his death, Academician Chaplygin became the leader of the theoretical research of this organization. The work of the institute embraces all important problems of aeroplane construction and investigates aerodynamical phenomena in the laboratory, using models flown in an artificial draft. A staff of competent students of aerodynamics was assembled at the institute, and as a result, numerous scientific achievements in aeronautics and hydrodynamics were brought about, for which G. G. Kulman, V. P. Vetchinkin, and especially the corresponding member of the Academy of Sciences A. N. Tupolev have been mostly responsible.

Mention must also be made of the various expeditions organized for the purpose of scientific study and investigation of mineral resources. These expeditions made great contributions toward the development of Russian industry, and as a result new industries were created, such as the mining of potassium salts, and of phosphate fertilizers. The expeditions to Pamirs, headed by Academician Yu. Shmidt, and his investigation of navigation routes in the northern Arctic Ocean are generally known throughout the world. The fearless journey of Shmidt and his co-workers from Cape Cheluskin to the shores of America was followed with breathless interest throughout Russia. Just as important are the scientific accomplishments of other Russian explorations in the Arctic regions, where fifty-seven stations for scientific observation were maintained by the Soviet Government in 1939. In that year alone, Soviet pilots flew over 1,000,000 miles in the Arctic; the flight of M. V. Vodopyanov over the Kara Sea on May 24, 1939, provoked world wide interest.

In conclusion, it is to be acknowledged that many achievements made in Russia have found application in other countries. Suffice it to say that polymerization of olefin hydrocarbons discovered in Russia by the author of this article was developed in the United States and made possible the manufacture of 100 octane gasoline, so acutely needed today for military aviation.

Information on the work now in progress in the research laboratories of U.S.S.R. is very meager in this time of war. However, even the accidental bits of information to reach us indicate that scientific ideas born in the minds of Russian scientists are not being permitted to come to a standstill. Research is being continued; for instance, a powerful cyclotron for utilizing atomic energy was recently installed in Kazan. Scientific effort is, naturally, being generally directed today to serving the needs of the Army and Navy.

There is no doubt that after this war the research workers of the numerous Russian institutes will resume their work on problems the solution of which will raise the cultural life of all humanity to a higher plane.

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# Russians in Manchuria

BY GEORGE C. GUINS

**T**ODAY, of all the Manchurian cities, Harbin is the only one still preserving its Russian appearance. This may be explained by the fact that one-half of the entire Russian population of Manchuria (54,000, according to the 1940 census) lives in Harbin.

Manchuria never belonged to Russia, but it is so situated that Russian interests there, political as well as economic, are of the utmost importance. Russia needs a free outlet to the ocean, and the road across Manchuria to Vladivostok is the shortest one to the Pacific ports. This fact forced the former Russian government to seek from China a concession for the building of a railroad across Manchuria.

Another reason for Russia's interest in this territory is based on the fact that northern Manchuria is the hinterland for Vladivostok and the Maritime province. The latter is a long, narrow tract of land adjoining the lower Amur, and if the vast territory of northern Manchuria, which is to the west of this province, should, with its well-developed system of railroads, become thickly populated by the Chinese or Japanese, this would become a source of constant danger to the Maritime province. Thus, the problem of Manchuria becomes for Russia not only an economic problem of transportation, but of political safety as well.

When the Russians completed, about forty years ago, the building of the railroad joining European Russia and Siberia with Vladivostok and the port of Dalny (now Dairen), Manchuria was still a wild and thinly populated region. The construction of the railroad caused, as is usually the case, rapid growth in population and great economic development. The truly American tempo of this progress is explained also by certain accompanying favorable circumstances. Three times during the first quarter of this century a golden rain, so to speak, fell upon Manchuria.

The first of these was the prosperity caused by the construction of the Chinese Eastern Railway. The builders did not spare the government's money, and many contractors made their fortunes, and remained in Manchuria, continuing their enterprises as lumbermen, miners, and builders. In 1904-1905, during the Russo-Japanese War, gold again rained upon Manchuria. This time, other supply

contractors and merchants enriched themselves. A considerable amount of money was left in the pockets of the city inhabitants, and the newly established towns and cities grew and quickly accumulated riches. Since the end of the Russo-Japanese War, only northern Manchuria has remained in the sphere of Russian influence, and I shall hereafter refer only to this northern area.

During the first World War materials were transported across Manchuria into Russia and the city of Harbin, conveniently situated at the intersections of railroads and a navigable river (Sungari), became a center of supply and distribution. The city grew and developed quickly, and the Russian Revolution and the Civil War in Siberia did not stop this development. In Harbin were centralized various military organizations. There lived the representatives of different foreign countries, busy with the intervention in Siberia, and there the masses of refugees from Russia took shelter. Some of these refugees brought with them considerable amounts of money, and many brought valuable professional knowledge and experience. Many intellectuals came into Harbin and settled there. Russian refugees, however, were settling not only in Harbin, but also around important railroad stations, which gradually grew into small towns.

The Chinese government put at the disposal of the Chinese Eastern Railway not only the narrow tract of land for building the track itself, but also many lots for important railroad settlements. In this way cities of the Russian types came into existence, Harbin among them. Here were built railroad establishments, station houses, warehouses, barracks for troops guarding the railroad, homes and clubs for the employees, churches, and schools. Here, lots were assigned for both the Russian and Chinese banks, stores, and markets.

As soon as these railroad settlements became populated they took on the appearance of small Russian towns, and Harbin of a big Russian city. It preserves this appearance even at the present time.

The Russian inhabitants studied the Chinese language, while the Chinese studied Russian. Russian self-government, which was established in Harbin, was shared by the representatives of other nationalities. However, the Russians outnumbered all of them; they were at the head of the city administration, and business affairs were conducted in the Russian language.

Such was the state of affairs in 1920, when the White movement failed, and all power in Russia fell completely into the hands of the Soviet government. Since then, the history of Manchuria has been full of uncertainties, and the position of the Russians in Manchuria has radically changed three times, along with changes in the admin-

istration and status of the Chinese Eastern Railway. The first of these changes took place after the fall of the White movement; the second, after China's recognition of the U.S.S.R., and the appearance on the Chinese Eastern Railway of Soviet administration; and the third after the establishment of Japanese control and administration over the whole of Manchuria. In this article I shall review only the last of these three periods—that of Manchuria under Japanese control.

In September, 1931, the so-called "Manchurian incident" took place, and the Japanese Kwantung army occupied all northern and Southern Manchuria. If, in 1929, during the Sino-Russian conflict, Japan had remained neutral, this time it was to be the U.S.S.R. which was to remain neutral.

On February 18, 1932, the formation of the new state of Manchukuo was proclaimed. This new state was to remain under Japan's protectorate. In this way Japanese control was spread evenly over the sphere of Russian influence. The third period for the Russians in Manchuria had begun—the period of the destruction of Russian influence and the forcing of Russians out of Manchuria.

For a period of three years, 1932-1935, some of the Russians still remained on the Chinese Eastern Railway, but cooperation with the Japanese was a harder task than cooperation with the Chinese had been. Both sides, however, avoided open conflict, and finally reached some agreement. In March of 1935 the deed of sale of the Railway was signed in Tokyo. Soon thereafter, nearly all the employees of the Railway having Soviet passports sold their possessions in Manchuria and left for Russia. The Russian population in Manchuria diminished noticeably, as the Russians continued to either return to Russia, to move to the south, or to emigrate abroad. The Japanese population, on the other hand, quickly increased in number. The Russian population in Manchuria reached about 100,000 in 1930, but the census of 1940 showed that at that time only 54,000 still remained in Manchuria. Statistics show that the number of marriages and births also decreased. Thus, even the natural growth of the Russian population was on the wane.

Russian influence in Manchuria disappeared even more quickly than did the Russian population. Russian schools and colleges were closed. The Russian Polytechnical Institute was replaced by a Japanese Institute. For a while, a Manchurian university existed for Russians, with departments of commerce and a polytechnical division, but the system of instruction and the program were both so poor that the graduates were prepared only for the most simple and rou-

tine technical work, or for positions as interpreters and clerks.

All Russian establishments and enterprises began to shrink as an inevitable result of the economic policy of Manchukuo. The introduction of monopolies made private business impossible. Metallurgic and lumber industries and the export business were placed under administrative control. High taxes and enforced loans destroyed capital. Foreign banks were closed, and Japanese banks gave credit only with official sanction. Low ceiling prices on rent took the profits from the homeowners. Briefly, the rich people lost their profits and are gradually losing even their capital.

The closing of many Russian and foreign enterprises has intensified the problem of unemployment. The Russian population, having lost the possibility not only to save but even to earn money, is now being obliged to spend its last savings and is gradually becoming poorer and poorer.

The Japanese support those of the intelligentsia who are loyal to them. They have given jobs, though poorly paid at that, to this group. In this way, the Japanese authorities are giving the means of existence to many former military officers, administrators, teachers, and writers. They are also giving help to several Russian charitable organizations, but always the impoverishment of the Russians increases.

More and more persons have become dependent upon the Japanese administration. There is one way and one way only: to accept a job from the hands of the Japanese. This is especially true in regard to the youth, which is prepared for this by the specially controlled educational system. But in order to receive employment it is not enough to be loyal to the Japanese; it is also necessary to preserve an anti-Soviet attitude. Although the Japanese government is officially supposed to be friendly with the U.S.S.R., open propaganda is being carried on against communism, the Comintern, and against the whole Soviet régime. The Russian population gets only very one-sided information about events going on in Russia; in print, only criticism of communism and Soviet Russia is allowed.

The guidance as well as the surveillance of all Russians is entrusted to the hands of a Bureau, which handles the affairs of the Russian emigrants living in the Manchurian Empire. This Bureau is located in Harbin, and is an establishment of large proportions. At its head is a general, and under him are several chiefs of departments. There are also local departments, which are located wherever there are more or less numerous groups of Russian emigrants. The Bureau is in charge of registering the emigrants, and those who are

unregistered are considered disloyal and are deprived of certain privileges, such as receiving the foodstuffs which are occasionally distributed on the recommendation of the Bureau. Those who are unregistered are also prevented from obtaining visas for going abroad.

The registered emigrants pay a certain monthly sum out of their net earnings. These monthly payments place at the disposal of the Bureau a considerable amount of money, so much in fact that the Bureau has free capital, is able to publish a newspaper, *The Voice of the Emigrant*, a weekly illustrated magazine, and books.

No play may be performed, no dance, lecture, or collection may take place without the permission of the Bureau. It also supervises education.

It is to be understood, of course, that the Bureau watches closely the political tendencies of the emigrants, supplying information about their behavior to the administration. The Chief of the Bureau is also President of the Far Eastern Union of Military Men, the membership of which is composed of former Russian officers (though there are many who did not join the union).

If the need should arise, the Bureau would be able to create a military organization quickly. Ataman Semenov, who is allowed to live near Dairen, has no official position, but his special representative occupies the post of adviser to the Bureau. A special department of the Bureau is in charge of hiring Russian emigrants for railroad service. Quite a few are so employed, among them several outstanding engineers. At the present time, all Russians are appointed to the same sector, which has thus become wholly Russian. Some accept this fact as an expression of confidence; others, mistrusting the Japanese, believe they are preparing a group of specialists to have on hand in case of Japanese occupation of Russian territory. Of course, the Bureau itself and all its employees may be used for this purpose in case of an emergency, as an organized administrative organ for the occupied territory.

The Bureau in Manchuria is a much more decent organization than similar organizations in Peking and in Tientsin. Often it gives real aid to Russian emigrants. But it must be understood, of course, that the Bureau may in no way be called an independent organization. It is wholly subordinated to the Japanese Military Mission in Harbin, which takes the place of a Military Governor General in northern Manchuria. The President of the Bureau and his assistants, the department managers, go to the Japanese Military Mission with daily reports. Prominent Russians whose opinions and actions in-

terest the Mission are also summoned there for questioning.

The fact that such a Bureau exists in Manchuria is interesting even if we forget our surmises about the future plans of Japan. It proves the existence and official preservation of Russian emigrants in Manchuria. But recently a certain disagreement occurred between the civil authorities of Manchukuo and the Military Mission. The government wanted all Russian emigrants to become automatically Manchurian subjects and so to occupy in the state the position of a national minority. But the military department considered as more useful the policy of preserving the Russian emigrants as such. One prominent Japanese official expressed the following opinion about the Russians: "Neither the Red nor White Russians like us. It is up to us to decide, according to political expediency, with which side to cooperate."

But what are the political views of the Russian emigrants in Manchuria? With few exceptions the tendency of the emigrants is sharply anti-communistic but at the same time patriotic. During the period of famine in Russia in 1922, Harbin collected considerable sums for the relief of the victims in the U.S.S.R. and sent special relief trains into Russia. At the present time, of course, Harbin does nothing for Russian relief and gives no help to war-torn Russia. To do so would be impossible as long as the Russian emigrants exist under the aegis of Japan, the ally of Russia's enemy. Otherwise, no doubt, the Russian population of Manchuria, notwithstanding its own impoverishment, would give all possible help to its brothers.

Several circumstances must be taken into consideration in order to understand clearly the political views of the Russian emigrants in Manchuria. First of all, it must be remembered that many Russians have been living there since the construction of the railroad. Many were born there, though they are nevertheless called emigrants. These Russians feel very painfully each curtailment of their rights, not to mention the dismissal of Russians from the leading institutions, and the complete abolition of Russian participation in the management of the region. Secondly, the proximity of the Russian border naturally increases the tendency to return to the native land. This is why Manchuria gave so many "homecomers," and why the movement of "reconciliation" was such a success. Finally, the Russians in Manchukuo live in an environment of strange culture, strange customs and a strange, difficult language. All in all, their complete assimilation in Manchukuo would seem to be highly improbable.

As a result of all these circumstances, Russian emigrants in Man-

churia feel their estrangement from the motherland as painfully as, perhaps, nowhere else in the world. The Russians live at the very border of their native country but know that they cannot return there because of the present régime, which they believe to be perilous to their native country. Some of them are ready to reconcile themselves with this régime, and either return to Russia or, barring that, to cooperate, on business grounds, with representatives of the Soviet administration. The supporters of this idea are mostly business men, not very stable in their principles. The other groups are still ready to oppose communism, and at the present time they still believe that this can be done with the help of Japanese arms. To this last category belong the Fascists.

We must mention one more trend of thought existing in present day Manchuria. This trend is represented by those who do not accept the Soviet régime or communism, but who strive to combat them not by force but with ideas. Following this principle, the theory of "Solidarity" was formulated in Harbin.<sup>1</sup>

More space in this article cannot be given to the description of this last theory, but it is clear how tragic the outbreak of war in the Far East would be for the great majority of Russians in Manchuria. On the other hand, the final expulsion of the Russians from Manchuria would be a great injustice, and a loss for Russia.

At one time a rumor was circulated in Harbin to the effect that Harbin would be proclaimed an international city and that the Japanese would accept this as a measure of compromise in order to reconcile the foreign powers to the existence of Manchukuo. Control of the city and the railroad would supposedly be given to an international committee. The rumor was met with enthusiasm. However, it had no basis in fact. But if, at some future time, such a plan should be effected, it would, in all probability, prove to be the best solution for a region where China holds the sovereignty, where Japan has invested colossal amounts of capital and has a population of 400,000, and where Russia has laid the foundation of economic and cultural development and is still interested in having transit passage and in assuring the safety of her border.

<sup>1</sup>G. C. Guins, *On the Road to the State of the Future: From Liberalism to Solidarity*. Harbin, 1930.

G. C. Guins and L. G. Zickman, *The Entrepreneur*. Harbin, 1940. See especially the article, "An Outline of Solidarity" by G. C. Guins.

# The Humorous Poems of Count A. K. Tolstoy

BY CLARENCE A. MANNING

RUSSIAN literature is predominantly serious. It is, as has so often been said, a literature of ideas, a literature frankly intended by its authors to educate the people and to lead them on the path of freedom and progress. Its greatest writers have sought to set forth the problems and struggles of the human soul in its efforts to find the way on which it should go. As a result, the foreign reader has frequently received an impression similar to that of H. G. Wells, when he said of Count Leo Tolstoy and other Russian authors: "There is no depth of humor in any of them, no laughter, no creative fun." Far too often such works as Gorky's *Lower Depths* have been treated as typically Russian in the depravity of the characters, the drabness of the scene, and the almost endless discussion of ideals and realities.

Yet these works illustrate but one side of the Russian character. That there are others is well proved by the unending stories of the gaiety and irresponsibility of the old Russian gentry and the lively character of the Russian court. It is proved by the actions of the Russians in many a crisis of their history when their courage and steadiness surprised the world as they have in 1942.

Russian literature as a whole does not justify the usual impression that foreigners have of it, and many would be surprised to be told that there is as goodly an amount of amusing and satirical stories as in any other country, and that these are the works of deservedly great authors. The Russian stage can count as many successful comedies as it can tragedies, and we need only think of Griboedov's *Woe from Wit*, Gogol's *Inspector General*, and many other works. Even Pushkin, affectionately known in his youth as Cricket, always preserved a lightness and a sense of irony and sarcasm that peeks out in *Eugeny Onegin*, and delights in poking fun at the over-serious aspects of Russian life and thought.

These same qualities are shown by Count Aleksey Konstantinovich Tolstoy, a distant relative of Count Leo, and an author who is far too little known outside of Russia. Yet he was typical of that high level of successful delittantism that has been so often found in Russians of education and wealth, and is perhaps more common than among English gentlemen of whom it is often predicated. A read-

ing of the works of A. K. Tolstoy will give us a better idea of the intellectual qualities of at least part of the Russian people than will pages of gloomy and serious argumentation.

Tolstoy was born August 24, 1817, and was brought up on the beautiful estate of his uncle. He had all possible opportunities for acquaintance with the best that Russia and Europe could afford. From the time when he was nine years old, he was the friend and playmate of the future Tsar Alexander II. He was taken to Germany and sat on the knee of Goethe. He passed his university examinations successfully. He served for a while in the Crimean War. When Alexander II ascended the throne, he offered his friend the post of his aide-de-camps, but Tolstoy had no interest in the life of a courtier and when he declined this post, he was given the honorary title of Master of Hunts. He married a lady to whom he was sincerely devoted and until his death September 28, 1875, he passed his time in travel and study.

Tolstoy's real interest was literature and the Russian past. He loved beauty and Italian art and he declared that his love of the outdoors and of art had led him to pitch his works in a major and not a minor key, as did so many of his contemporaries. He was always fascinated by the strange figure of Ivan the Terrible, that Tsar who embodied the extremes of the Russian character both for good and ill. His major works all deal with that man and his period. There is the novel *Prince Serebryany*, translated into English as a *Prince of Outlaws*, the story of an honest and straightforward man at the fantastic court. There is his dramatic trilogy, *The Death of Ivan the Terrible*, *Tsar Feodor*, and *Tsar Boris*, which deals with the rise and fall of Boris Godunov. The second play centering around the saintly Feodor who was successful at everything save ruling, was for twenty years kept off the stage but after consent was obtained for its production, its success was assured.

In his own day Count Tolstoy was accused of lacking seriousness and of being interested in art for art's sake. He was accused of a lack of social interests. All this was true and false, for he was too much of a gentleman and too sincere an artist to interpret art for art's sake as a mere flaunting of accepted conventions for the sake of shocking the susceptibilities of his contemporaries. He was too much of a patriot and an artist to confine himself to picturing evil conditions and to indict a whole nation as well as an entire government.

He did have an ideal for Russia. He hated the excesses of the bureaucracy and he hated equally that attitude of submission that

had been taken over from the Tatars. He believed in the value of art and the value of the free spirit and he set forth his artistic creed in the poem "St. John Damascene," the story of the high official at the court of the Caliph of Bagdad who gave up his post to become a humble monk and to pour out his songs in the service of God.

One of Tolstoy's ideals was the glorification of the pre-Tatar Russia, when Russia stood in the forefront of the Christian nations of the day. He believed that that time would come again and he looked at life from the standpoint of a Russian patriot and a European gentleman. In many of his poems he added a light and whimsical touch in his choice of materials and his moulding of phrases, that have remained in the minds of the educated Russian people.

Take "The Dream of Counselor Popov," the very distinguished official who appears at a reception in honor of an even more distinguished minister—without his trousers. He hides behind a screen but is discovered and accused of all kinds of liberal and radical activity. To save himself, he finally consents to denounce all of his friends, and it is only then that he wakes up to find it all a bad dream. And there is the moral!

You can forget your necktie, orders, buckle,  
 But trousers. At the thought it makes your courage knuckle.  
 How could he do it? Could he make his way  
 Into a hall, dressed as a man of yore.  
 How could he get behind the screen to stay,  
 Unmarked by all? Can fancy tell me more?  
 O honored reader, what have I to say?  
 I'm not Popov. Please bother me no more.  
 Now sense or not—it is just as it seems,  
 I cannot answer for another's dreams.

The gem of such poems was the delightful "History of Russia from the Ninth to the Nineteenth Century," in which with delicious irreverence and keen satire Tolstoy pokes fun at all the attempts to introduce order into Russia, especially with a Germanic tinge. The text is that well-known phrase of Nestor, the Chronicler: "Our land is rich and fertile but there is no order in it."

Now listen well, my children,  
 While grandsir talks a bit.  
 Our land is rich and fruitful,  
 Of order not a whit.

The truth of this, my children,  
A thousand years ago  
Our sires sat and pondered,  
No order did they know.

So then they all assembled  
And said: "Why, are we fools?  
*Varyags* we now should summon,  
Let them assume the rule . . ."

And so there came three brothers,  
*Varyags* both strong and fit.  
They see the land is fruitful,  
Of order, not a whit.

Then thought the bold companions,  
The devil here is balked.  
"Es ist ja eine Schande,  
Wir müssen wieder fort."

The older brother Rurik  
"Just wait!" he said with vim.  
"Fortgeh'n wär ungebürlich,  
Vielleicht its's nicht so schlimm . . ."

• • • • •  
And when Vladimir mounted  
Upon his father's throne  
*Da endigte für immer*  
*Der alte Religion.* . . .

"Perun's an awful monster  
And when we knock him flat,  
You'll see the splendid order  
We will secure by that."

And so he sent for clergy  
To Athens and Tsargrad.  
The priests they came by thousands  
Baptizing every yard.

The Tatars when they saw it  
Decided 'twas their game.  
So they put on their trousers  
And unto Rus they came. . .

Each day some brother slandered,  
 Another to the horde.  
 The land was good and fertile,  
 But order was a fraud.

Ivan the Third then cometh.  
 He said, "What fools you are!  
 We are no longer children,"  
 He kicked the Tatars far.

And so the land won freedom  
 From all its ills and woe,  
 Though it was very fertile,  
 No order did it know.

Ivan the Fourth ascended,  
 The grandson to the Third,  
 Of many wives the husband,  
 A hangman too, we've heard.

With such a Tsar the people  
 Could live with peace and pride,  
 But nothing is eternal  
 And Tsar Ivan soon died.

• • • • •  
 Tsar Peter loved his order,  
 Like Tsar Ivan would sit;  
 And sometimes he was pleasant,  
 And sometimes he was lit.

"You all, ere Christmas cometh,  
 With order I shall cram,"  
 And so in search of order,  
 He went to Amsterdam.

And when he came among us,  
 He shaved our faces smooth,  
 By Christmas he had dressed us  
 As Dutchmen too, for sooth.

• • • • •  
 O'er many ancient legends  
 To write this tale today  
 Has worked a monk most humble,  
 God's servant Aleksey.

So ends the parody but it is to be noted that in this whole poem Tolstoy agrees with the Slavophile thinkers who argued that Russia and her development had been profoundly warped and blighted by the various German influences that had been exerted upon the land. The introduction of the bureaucratic methods under Peter the Great did as much or more harm than the Tartar invasions or the Muscovite tyrants, and for her proper development Russia needed to be brought under beneficent influences, to resume self-respecting liberty, and to accept freely cultured and humane ideals.

Closely allied in spirit with such humorous poems was the great hoax that Tolstoy and his cousin Aleksey Mikhailovich Zhemchuzhnikov played on Russian society by introducing the poetry of Kozma Prutkov, one of the most unconscious humorists that any land has ever seen.

Kozma Prutkov was the very incarnation of that part of the conceited and brainless bureaucracy which isolated Russia from a rational participation in the development of modern ideas. His poems expressed the fundamental emptiness of the man's mind and they became popular because they were such a complete expression of his utter lack of self-criticism, and of his profound conviction that he was really a great artist and an original thinker. More than that, he was a good propagandist for himself in his own opinion and never hesitated to reply to any criticisms that appeared in the press.

Needless to say, "Kozma Prutkov" was not a real person. He was only a rather transparent mask for Tolstoy and his cousin and they pretended as "false friends" to lead him on to write and manifest all those qualities which they were desirous of ridiculing. Prutkov fell into the trap and at their inspiration he poured out his soul in a series of poems, aphorisms, and dramas that were almost perfect examples of the way in which literature should not be written. Yet they are the logical extreme to which many of the second rate poets and thinkers were tending. Prutkov carefully explained and stoutly denied that he ever wrote parodies. With righteous anger, he declared in a letter to the critic of the *St. Petersburg News*, "I never wrote parodies. . . . I merely analyzed in my mind the majority of the poets who succeeded. This analysis led me to my thesis; for the gifts scattered among poets at random, all seemed to be contained in myself. When I came to this conviction, I decided to write. When I decided to write, I wished for fame. In wishing for fame, I chose the most direct way to it—the imitation of those poets who had already acquired it in some degree. Do you hear, imitation and not parody. Where do you get the idea that I write parodies?"

Prutkov is shameless in his quest for fame and he shows himself destitute of all ideals of delicacy, taste, and harmony. The results are amusing, and the Russian literary world had to laugh in spite of themselves at his exuberant outpourings.

The fable was a common form of the day, and Krylov had carried it to perfection, but he always put in a moral. Prutkov was envious and realized that here was the true path to glory. So he too tried it.

#### FORGETMENOTS AND CARRIAGE STEPS

Pakhomich shaking on his steps  
 Brought home forgetmenots galore.  
 His heels were blistered and so sore.  
 He treated them at home with camphor.  
 O reader, just forget those sweet forgetmenots.  
 I put them in just for a joke.  
 Remember this. I make it plain.  
 When you have blisters on your heels  
 And you must get away from pain,  
 Do like Pakhomich—use your camphor.

This is a fable with a vengeance. Kozma Prutkov has kept the moral, a banal statement of no moral or artistic value whatever, and around it he has heaped empty phrases, which he cheerfully recognizes as nonsense, but then Prutkov must write.

His wisdom and his aphorisms were equally deep and all searching.

"What will others say about you, if you can say nothing about yourself?"

"Were there no tailors, tell me, how would you distinguish the ranks of officials?"

"Death is put at end of life, so that you can prepare for it better."

"The sooner you leave, the sooner you'll arrive."

"If you want to be happy, be it."

"Above all, no one embraces the unembraceable."

Finally the poor old man wrote his last words, as he died.

#### WORDS BEFORE DEATH

The hour comes, when my strength's fading  
 From causes organic, I know.  
 Farewell, my dear Assaying Office,

Where I to lofty rank did go.  
But I the Muses did embrace  
While working in my trusted place.  
Unto the grace are but few paces.  
Farewell, my poetry, my pen,  
And thou farewell, my writing paper,  
With which I did such good to men.  
I am a lamp that's going out,  
A boat that can no longer float.  
Yes, here they come! My friends, God help them!  
Here stand the Spaniards, Greeks around.  
Her's Yunker Schmidt... Pakhomich bringing  
Forgetmenots bound round and round.  
My old Conductor's calling. Ach!

And so he dies, leaving these last utterances of an "artistic soul" to be filed away amid the dusty papers of the Assaying Office, from which they were later rescued.

Kozma Prutkov is a delightful character with a great deal of real humor and satire in his makeup. He is after all a continuation of that amusing character of Pushkin, Ivan Petrovich Belkin, but he goes quite beyond his predecessor in that all of his writings are in the style which we should expect of him with his limitations and his abounding conceit.

We can well imagine how Aleksey Tolstoy chuckled over the successes of his protégé and victim and how other writers snarled as they saw their devices bungled so shamefully and so aptly by this stupid official who in their opinion had no right to appear in print at all. Irascible as he was, he was a dangerous customer, for each of his retorts was so obvious and contained so sharp a sting that he could not be successfully attacked.

Yet the real meaning that was back of Prutkov's extremes was painfully clear. The answer to him was the adoption of an intelligent and enlightened culture, the realization of the proper dignity of a civilized free man. It was a note that Russian literature and Russian life needed, and there was no one who could press it home more keenly than could that talented and civilized friend of the Tsar, Count Aleksey Konstantinovich Tolstoy, a man who was at home in Europe and who was familiar with the best that Europe and Russia had to offer to the world. It was far easier for the theorists and the critics to sneer at him as a man who believed in art for art's sake than it was for them to follow him in his desires to see Russia civil-

ized, truly cultured, and playing its proper rôle in the field of culture.

It was unfortunate for Russia that such a man was allowed to fall into the discard. It was unfortunate for the foreign view of Russia that readers turned away from him for authors who overemphasized the darker aspects of the national life and who lacked his sense of balance and his appreciation of the world. Count A. K. Tolstoy was in the true tradition of Russian literature. He was a sincere Russian patriot and more perhaps than any author of his time he kept that golden mean of sincere and intelligent thinking and honest and careful artistic work that would allow him to be a great figure of his day and age. For his keen and satirical criticism of Russian life, for his fervent belief in the destiny of Russia and of the potentialities of the Russians, he deserves a high place, and he is far more typical of his nation and his age than are many of those writers who lead foreign critics to say, "It's so Russian."

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## Book Reviews

WEBB, SIDNEY and BEATRICE. *The Truth About Russia*. New York, Longmans, Green & Co., 1942. 128 pp. \$1.50.

WILLIAMS, ALBERT RHYS. *The Russians: The Land, the People and Why They Fight*. New York, Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1943. 248 pp. \$2.00.

CARROLL, WALLACE. *We're in This with Russia*. Boston, Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1942. 264 pp. \$2.00.

The first and second of the books under review belong to a specific kind of literature which may be called "pro-Soviet mythology." Both have been written by authors who have already strongly committed themselves to the thesis that, under the Soviets, Russia has become a democracy, a country governed "by the people for the people."

The book signed by two "over-eighties" actually consists of a paper written by the female partner of the famous team, and of a revised translation of the Stalin Constitution. The paper is a condensed restatement of Webb's *Soviet Communism*, the basic discovery of which was that not only the Soviet system as it existed in 1935, i.e. before the constitutional reform, but even the Party system and the system of trade unions granted the Russian people a more democratic régime than the British or the American people have under their institutions. A few weeks after the publication of that earlier

book, a series of articles began to appear in official Soviet papers where it was acknowledged that democracy had died out in the Soviets, in the Party, and in the trade unions. The constitutional draft was interpreted as a means of inculcating democratic life into the petrified Soviet system and, in the course of the year 1936, orders were issued to revive democracy within the Party and the trade unions. For those who know a little about the constitutional history of the Soviet State, these orders contained nothing new; similar orders had been issued many times before, and apparently they had remained on paper, as otherwise there would be no need for their frequent reiteration. Moreover, the Stalin Constitution of 1936 virtually destroyed the original pattern of the Soviet system so highly praised by the Webbs, and reshaped the political form of "Soviet democracy" according to Western patterns. The constitutional reform meant, therefore, either replacing a better and more democratic structure by a worse and less democratic one, or else repudiating the idea that the original Soviet structure was "a new word in political organization," as the Webbs thought it to have been.

These problems are not faced by the authors of *The Truth About Russia*. They simply maintain against overwhelming evidence, that Stalin is not a dictator, they assert that public organizations "nominate candidates for offices,"

whereas, in reality, during the first elections to the Supreme Soviet, one candidate only for each electoral district was nominated by an "electoral staff" appointed by the Party leadership; they minimize such facts as the great purge of the years 1936-38, largely effected after the enactment of the new constitution, and the prohibition of any criticism of "the living philosophy of the Communist Party," by treating them as mere "infantile diseases."

The author of the book entitled *The Russians* is a former Congregationalist minister who was able to personally observe the Soviet experiment at its different phases and who recognized in it the realization of the dearest dreams of the apostles of progress. His conviction could not be shaken by any facts: five million men, women and children died as victims of enforced collectivization; well, it had to be done by the communist leadership since this was the only way to lead Russia towards progress. The great purge cost Russia thousands of lives and returned the country to the terroristic régime of the early revolutionary years; well, in this way the fifth column was eliminated. The underlying philosophy is clear: the end of promoting progress sanctifies every means used to attain it. The problem, what is progress, and who has the right to determine the necessary means, is not even discussed.

Nevertheless, Mr. Williams' book is not devoid of value. It contains a well written account of the author's personal experience in Russia, giving insight into the human aspect of the great war tragedy. A good deal of up-to-date

information about Russia's achievements during the past twenty-five years is also helpful, if read by one who is wholly aware of the author's bias.

Mr. Carroll's book is of a quite different type. The author's purpose was to "look at Russia with a photographic eye and then to find the background of history, tradition, or doctrine which explains what he had seen."

Mr. Carroll is an excellent reporter, and the account of his short visit to Russia (from August to October 1941) is a series of literary snapshots of besieged Moscow, of a sector on the front where one of the earliest victories of the Red Army was won, and of the provisional capital of the U.S.S.R., in Kuibyshev. In the course of these three months, Mr. Carroll witnessed the generosity and loyalty of the Russian people, the ability of the Russians for technical training and their dauntlessness. The military effectiveness of the Soviet machinery did not blind him: like many other foreigners who have visited Russia since the outbreak of the war, he noticed the low standard of living prevailing in the country. On this basis he concludes that, at least for decades to come, the communist experiment in Russia could not induce the British or American masses to insist on imitating the Russian pattern.

To this extent Mr. Carroll's book is a valuable contribution. Unfortunately, his attempt to explain the facts by referring them to the historical background is much less successful. Like so many of the American writers on the subject, he has an entirely wrong idea of pre-revolutionary Russia. In his

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opinion the Russian people are only "one or two generations from the Middle Ages: medieval was their system of land tenure and the autocratic structure of government; in the sixteenth century, England had obviously more experience of free institutions than the Russia of Nicholas II . . . 80% of the soldiers in the armies of the Tsars were illiterate. . . Priests with crosses and icons marched at the head of pogroms of the Jewish quarters."

If such a historical background is taken for granted, then one may assert, as Mr. Carroll does, that "the Bolsheviks tried to propel the country from the sixteenth into the twenty-first century." Then the statement becomes possible that "in less than two decades, a hundred million people have been taught to read and write." And the Bill of Rights contained in the Stalin Constitution may be glorified in the following words: "For the first time, the Tartars of the Volga, the Uzbeks in Middle Asia . . . became conscious of rights which Anglo-Saxons had won many generations ago." That the basic freedoms were granted to Russia by the manifesto of October 30, 1905 and that, between 1906-14, these freedoms, though in a moderate form, did exist in Russia, is unknown to the author, as well as the achievements of the agencies of self-government, among them the successful struggle to overcome illiteracy. Likewise, when speaking of the racial equality in contemporary Russia, Mr. Carroll assumes that it was granted to the people of Russia by the Communists. In reality this was done by the Provisional government.

In the last part of his book, Mr.

Carroll makes some predictions about the probable policy of the Soviet Government after the war. His conclusion is sound: "By internal necessity, they will be obliged to work for a long period of peace and stability." Recent events, however, have proved that Mr. Carroll was wrong when he assumed that the promise of collective security on the part of Great Britain and the United States had induced the Soviet Government to abandon its claims to the territories acquired in 1939 and 1940.

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MAYNARD, JOHN. *Russia in Flux: Before October*. London, Victor Gollancz, 1941. 301 pp. 7s.6d.

In spite of its size, John Maynard's *Russia in Flux* is an essay on pre-revolutionary Russian history, the original purpose of which, as we learn from the author's preface, was to serve as an introduction to a book on Russia since the Revolution. A historical essay, even an overgrown one, is a legitimate form of literature, and this one is of a very high quality, both from the literary and the historical point of view. Few recent books on Russia, written in Western languages, display an equal familiarity with Russian history and Russian culture, and many of the author's penetrating observations will be extremely helpful not only to the general reader but to the specialist as well. Of particular value are the chapters dealing with Russia's intellectual history which occupy almost one-half of the book. In this part the author deals with the Westerners and the Slavophils, the Nihilists and the Populists, the

Marxists and their opponents, with a special chapter dedicated to "some religious and anti-rationalist thought." I do not know of any other book available to non-Russian readers in which one can find, within such a brief compass, an equally lucid presentation of various trends of Russian thought. These chapters alone form a valuable contribution to literature on modern Russia, and in addition the book contains very interesting discussions of such subjects as the Russian peasant, the elements of unity and disunity in the Russian empire, and the political developments during the pre-revolutionary decades.

The author, however, has not fully avoided some of the dangers which are commonly encountered by historical essayists. Of these, one of the greatest is that of "stylization," which consists in selecting some features as typical and then exaggerating their importance to the detriment of a properly balanced presentation. Thus, in my opinion, the author makes too much of the "characteristic humility" of the Russian people. As one of the proofs he cites the well-known story of the ancient Russian annalist about the supposed invitation addressed by the Eastern Slavs to the Varangians from beyond the seas to come and rule over their land. But substantially the same story is told by Widukind about the coming of the Saxons to Britain! There is a similar exaggeration of the collectivist tendencies of the Russian peasantry as well as the extent to which the peasants, even in the post-Emancipation period, formed a world apart from the rest of Russian society. Likewise, in the

chapters on intellectual history too much space has been allotted to some isolated thinkers and esoteric groups, out of proportion to the limited influence which they actually exercised.

The topical manner of presentation occasionally leads the author to another error which consists in treating *en bloc* a development extended over a fairly long period of time without due chronological differentiation. I shall cite but two examples. A discussion of the modern Russian intelligentsia at the time of its inception brings in some features which did not appear until considerably later. In a similar fashion the account of the peasant life in the second half of the nineteenth century does not take into consideration the various changes that had been taking place during that time. In general, the progress of the Russian countryside in the last decades before the Revolution has not been sufficiently emphasized. Incidentally, in the part dealing with the peasantry the author tends to rely on some works of fiction which belong to the "literature of exposure" type as if it were unimpeachable historical evidence.

Some of the author's general assertions are not corroborated by any available evidence. Such, for instance, is his theory about the origins of the Soviets which he tries to link with the traditional *mir* of the Russian village, which supposedly continued to lead an underground existence after the suppression of the Revolution of 1905, to blossom forth again in 1917. Neither is there any evidence for making Rasputin a spokesman for the Russian peasantry "with an immense sympathy for his fellow-

peasants and their sufferings, a religious devotion to the autocracy as the hope of Russia, and a passion for peace," and for claiming that after his assassination he became a "martyr of the peasants." Equally unsubstantiated remains the author's assertion that in the early twentieth century nationalist sentiment played an important part in the agrarian riots and factory strikes in the Ukraine and in Georgia.

Finally, I find myself in disagreement with the author on some points of interpretation. As I see it, there is no valid reason to deny that in 1905 Russia obtained a constitution. It was a granted constitution, and a very limited one, but still it was a constitution. And one cannot speak of autocracy under a régime in which no new legislation could take effect without the concurrence of a representative assembly. Neither do I understand why the refusal of the Mensheviks to consider Russia ripe for a socialist revolution signified their failure to "emphasize the freedom of man," while the Bolsheviks, who held an opposite point of view, were representative of that emphasis. After all, why cannot a man exercise his "freedom" by consciously choosing the way of gradualism in preference to that of reckless revolutionary experimentation? Space does not permit me to indicate some other points of disagreement with Sir John, and to correct some minor factual errors which I have been able to detect here and there. The chief purpose of this review is to recommend his book heartily to all those interested in modern Russian history.

MICHAEL KARPOVICH

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MURPHY, J. T. *New Horizons.*  
London, John Lane, 1941. 352  
pp. 15s.

Mr. Murphy has written a most interesting and frank account of his career as a representative of the British Communist Party in the Comintern and in the Red International of Trade Unions. Since the Comintern has been one of the chief stumbling blocks in the good relations between the Soviet Union and the rest of the world, it is especially fitting now that its significance be examined. There has been no dearth of sensational exposés of doubtful authenticity, but there have been few straightforward accounts written without rancor.

Mr. Murphy's first connection with the Comintern was in 1919 when to many people it seemed self-evident that the interests of the working classes of the world were identical with those of the Soviet Union. The British working class almost spontaneously made effective protests against intervention in Russia. At that time Mr. Murphy was hardly a Communist, being a leader of the Shop Stewards, a trade union movement with some syndicalist tendencies. Yet when he attended the meeting of the Comintern in 1920, he was converted almost overnight to orthodox communism by Lenin himself, among others. Previously, with the other Shop Stewards, he believed that a political party should only propagandize, but that in the transfer of industrial undertakings from private to social ownership the workshop committees would become responsible for the administration of industry. The British delegates were soon made to understand that a political party was not a mere

propaganda agency but rather the directing force of the Revolution. Mr. Murphy's account bears witness to the amazing prestige the Russian Revolution and its leaders enjoyed in the early nineteen twenties.

During his connection with the Comintern, Mr. Murphy continually found it necessary to give up his own views and adopt those of the Comintern. This became increasingly difficult because with Russia's return to normal international relations in 1921, it became less obvious that the interests of the British proletariat and the Russian proletariat were identical. Although Mr. Murphy increasingly disagreed with the Comintern policy, he always swallowed his beliefs and remained a loyal member of the party. During the General Strike of 1926 he was on a committee which refused 2,000,000 rubles offered by the Russian trade unions. He later objected to Russian interference in the General Strike which he thought inept. Stalin read Murphy a lecture on this point; Murphy revised his views and remained a member of the Comintern in good enough standing to move the resolution for Trotsky's expulsion.

However, as was inevitable, Murphy broke with the party in 1932 on a minor point of tactics. Mr. Murphy refrains from drawing the conclusion that radical movements all over the world allow the Comintern to formulate their policies only at the expense of sacrificing independence and eventually the best members of the party. Yet, Mr. Murphy's book would seem to indicate that the Comintern has succeeded in making non-Russian communist parties essentially sterile. If Mr. Murphy has proved any-

thing, it is that the Comintern alienates the best labor leaders from itself and often from Russia.

HERBERT S. DINERSTEIN  
Cambridge, Massachusetts

BERCHIN, MICHEL and BEN-HORIN, ELIAHU. *The Red Army*. New York, W. W. Norton, 1942. 277 pp. \$3.00.

Most of the ascertainable facts about the Red Army, its leadership, organization, tactics and equipment, are put together intelligently and plausibly in this book by two Russian journalists who have lived outside their native country for many years. The authors select for emphasis those elements that have made for the strength of the Army: the high place always accorded to military affairs under the Soviet régime, the long apprenticeship in such useful branches of military training as winter flying and parachute jumping, the eastward shift in the Soviet industrial centre of gravity since 1929, the change-over from internationalism to nationalism in the indoctrination of the soldiers.

As one of the factors which held up the German advance in the critical first months of the war, in 1941, the authors mention the so-called Stalin Line, a system of defense in depth, built in the wooded swampy country of Western Russia and Western Ukraine, where nature itself provided many useful tank traps and aids to defense. Eventually, to be sure, the line of the front swept east of this line, but much valuable time had been saved and heavy losses had been inflicted on the enemy. The functioning of the low-flying *Stormovik*

airplane, a formidable weapon against German tanks, is described in some detail, along with the "Molotov breadbasket," first used in the war against Finland. This is a torpedo, six feet or more in length and about one foot in diameter, which spins as it drops, hurling out incendiary bombs.

The chapter on the High Command is illustrative of the rapid changes in the directing staff of the Red Army. Of the six men whose careers are described, Timoshenko, Shaposhnikov, Voroshilov, Budenny, Tukhachevsky, and Blucher, only one, Shaposhnikov, could still be identified with certainty as playing a leading role in the present campaign. Tukhachevsky, regarded by many observers as the most brilliant military mind produced by the Revolution, was summarily executed in 1938. Blucher, who displayed exceptional capacity in the Russian civil war, and subsequently served, under another name as military adviser to the Chinese nationalist armies and later was in command of the Soviet Far Eastern Army is one of many prominent Soviet citizens who have "disappeared."

Tukhachevsky and Blucher were suspected, rightly or wrongly, of political disaffection. Voroshilov and Budenny, of whom the former was an effective political commissar and the latter a dashing cavalry leader in the rough-and-tumble civil war simply proved unequal to the strenuous requirements of commanding large bodies of troops in modern war, and both have been relegated to obscurity. Timoshenko's name has been pointedly omitted from recent communiqués. Only the dapper former staff offi-

cer Shaposhnikov, among these six, continues to play the part of the irreplaceable specialist and the strategic brain of the Red Army.

The authors are too familiar with Russian realities, with the forces and personalities involved, to swallow the propaganda theory that the purge of 1938 was a matter of "shooting the fifth column." As they say:

"The absence of a fifth column in Soviet Russia does not prove that Tukhachevsky, who created the Soviet strategy and who, since Hitler's advent to power, was instrumental in the building of the Red Army's might, was a traitor; or that Generals Yakir and Feidman, both Jewish, were Hitler's agents; or that the old Bolshevik Gamarnik, who so persistently planted communism in the army, was willing to deliver that same army to the fascists."

The true reason for the absence of a fifth column, capable of organizing armed revolt is the same in Russia as in Germany: no such organization is possible where there is a ruthless and omnipotent secret police. As a matter of fact, it is a question whether the "no fifth column in Russia" theory has not been somewhat exaggerated. A Russian newspaper, published, of course under Nazi auspices, in Berlin, gives names and details of "collaborationist" administrations which have been set up in Smolensk and other occupied cities. No doubt the people who collaborate are a minority; but this would certainly be equally true in the case of Norway, the Netherlands or any other conquered country.

The authors would doubtless be the first to recognize that no com-

plete and authoritative history and description of the Red Army could be written at the present time, unless by Stalin or one of his few intimate military counsellors. The strictest secrecy has always been enforced as regards military matters in the Soviet Union; there have been no foreign observers at the great battlefields of the present war. The Soviet press, prolific in reports of deeds of individual heroism, has been notably blank in printing detailed interpretations of large-scale operations, even after these have been completed.

Within these inevitable limitations the authors have done a useful and valuable task. Their book presents in a convenient form the background material that helps to explain why the Russian Army, more and more national, less and less specifically "Red," has made such a successful and important contribution to the world struggle against Hitlerism.

WILLIAM HENRY CHAMBERLIN  
Cambridge, Mass.

TATE, MERZE. *The Disarmament Illusion*. New York, The Macmillan, 1942. 398 pp. \$4.00.

For one who is burdened with reading and reviewing quite a number of books on international law and relations, it is a particular pleasure to review the intelligent, sound, and erudite volume which Dr. Tate has published under the auspices of the Bureau of International Research of Harvard University and Radcliffe College. After extensive research in Europe Dr. Tate has written what promises to be the definitive history of the disarmament movement from 1870 to

1907. The author has, however, done more than that. She has also given an implicit as well as explicit critical exposition of the disarmament problem and its ramifications, such as international arbitration, international public opinion, etc. Here lies, for the reviewer at least, the main attraction and permanent value of the book.

This critical analysis is developed on the basis of a detailed and very well documented account of the attitude that was taken towards the problem of disarmament by pacifist organizations, churches, lawyers, the press, political parties, and governments. The author pays particular attention to the famous Rescript of Tsar Nicholas II, which gave the main impulse for the convocation of the First Peace Conference of the Hague. As a result of careful research she arrives at the conclusion that the political motives of the Tsar's advisers were the decisive influences behind the sensational diplomatic step, and that in comparison with those influences, among which one of the strongest was that of Witte, the humanitarian impulse of the Tsar played only a minor rôle. Dr. Tate is skeptical about the alleged influence upon the decision of the Russian government of the somewhat mythical report of Lord Salisbury as well as of the Inter-Parliamentary Conference of 1896. But she does not doubt the profound impression which was made upon the receptive mind of the Tsar by J. von Bloch's six volumes on the war of the future. It is, however, in the political, economic, and strategic interests of Russia, as her ministers saw them, that she finds the main impulse which led to the

Russian proposal for the limitation of armaments. Among those interests Dr. Tate mentions in particular Russia's need of money for the purpose of railway construction and industrialization, the country's general financial situation, the actual threat of a ruinous armament race with Austria with regard to artillery, and, finally, unstable domestic conditions, especially in Poland.

As to the general analysis, the author starts with the assumption that "disarmament is not a moral, not a mathematical, but a political problem," and that "armaments, like tariffs and embargoes, are merely the means by which a state seeks to give effect to its national policy in a system of 'Power Politics'. What is of primary importance in history is the policies of the state; if these are dynamic and therefore aggressive, then their armaments, whether military or naval, are a matter of concern for those nations menaced by the policies." On the other hand, the function, and frequently the intention of a policy of disarmament is the preservation of the status quo. General disarmament, therefore, presupposes general interest in the perpetuation of the status quo. Since the latter does not exist, the former is incapable of attainment. Dr. Tate arrives at the conclusion that "the only way to stop war is to remove its causes," and that "no enduring security can be found in compulsory unilateral disarmament or in competing armaments and alliances. There is no security for any state unless it be a security in which all its neighbors share."

The reviewer, who has tried to say the same thing for almost fif-

teen years, is especially grateful for Dr. Tate's wise remarks with reference to the limits of international arbitration as "an aid to diplomacy rather than a substitute for war," and that the causes for war "lie far deeper than arbitration can reach." Her remarks on the conditions upon which the success of international federation must depend are brief but very much to the point; she believes in the possibility of a regional but not of a universal federation.

The reviewer is less in agreement with the emphasis the author puts upon public opinion as a determining influence in foreign affairs. It rather seems to him that the "Phantom Public," to use the poignant expression of Walter Lippman, is especially elusive and ineffective in the determination of international policies. Only where policies affect the interests and convictions of the general public directly and within the framework of the immediate daily experience of the common man, is public opinion able to crystallize into a potent political force. Normally, foreign affairs are removed from this sphere of immediate experience, and when they enter it, public opinion usually is confronted with an accomplished fact. This explains why the democratic control of foreign policy is far from being a reality.

One wishes Dr. Tate would deal with these and other problems, only sketchily broached in this volume, in another work of a primarily systematic and analytical nature. For systematic analysis of political problems seems to be the author's peculiar gift. And how rare a gift it is.

HANS J. MORGENTHAU  
Kansas City University

**LEVIN, ALFRED.** *The Second Duma: A Study of the Social-Democratic Party and the Russian Constitutional Experiment.* New Haven, Yale University Press, 1940. 414 pp. \$3.00.

One should welcome Mr. Levin's choice of subject. The Second Duma was an important episode in Russian constitutional history, and the Social-Democratic group (Mr. Levin uses the term "fraction") played a leading part in the life of that Duma. At the same time, this episode has remained practically uninvestigated by the historians, and thus Mr. Levin's book is the first monograph on the subject. Its appearance is doubly significant. On the one hand it shows the growth and the intensity of interest in Russian history on the part of American historians. On the other hand it reflects the present situation of historical science in Soviet Russia. The voluminous literature which has appeared there in the course of the last twenty-five years on the history of the socialist movement is of a strikingly one-sided nature. Many books and articles are devoted to some event of secondary importance if this event can be interpreted in a sense favorable to the ruling party. On the other hand, some really important historical events have been left entirely without investigation simply because they might bring out something unfavorable to Bolshevism: or because the latter took no part in them.

The story of the Social-Democratic fraction in the Second Duma belongs to that last category. Its leaders were the Mensheviks and the most colorful moments of its activity were connected with their

names. Only a few Bolsheviks were in its ranks and their behavior was by no means to their credit. In addition, their leader, Mr. Aleksinsky, subsequently left the party and became an extreme reactionary. All this explains why the Soviet historians do not write books about the Social-Democratic group in the Second Duma and why practically no materials are being published on its history.

One should keep all this in mind when passing judgment on Mr. Levin's book, which is in the full sense of the word a pioneer undertaking. His study is based almost exclusively on printed material: the stenographic reports of the Duma, contemporary newspapers, memoirs mostly published during the last decades by the emigrés, and those few documents that have appeared in Soviet Russia. The scope and the nature of Mr. Levin's material has determined both the strong and the weak points of his book. It is the parliamentary activity of the Social-Democratic fraction that has received the most thorough treatment. The author has succeeded in presenting a full and clear picture of the Duma's general work and in particular of the Social-Democrats' political attitude. This, the central part of the book, is the most interesting and the most valuable one. Unfortunately, the other chapters in which the author tries to connect his subject with the general background of the Party and the history of the socialist movement in Russia, are less satisfactory, and it is here that the incompleteness of the material that was available to the author makes itself felt.

One of the principal gaps can be found in the author's discussion of

the internal struggle in the Russian Social-Democratic Party. Mr. Levin uses almost exclusively Bolshevik materials, published since the revolution, while it is hardly possible to give this problem an adequate treatment without an acquaintance with the whole body of party literature, both Menshevik and Bolshevik, published at the time. Likewise, only the use of that literature could have enabled the author to give a complete picture of the extra-parliamentary activity of the Social-Democratic fraction. As it is, his account is based on rather meager evidence. The same would apply to the story of the so-called conspiracy of the Second Duma Social-Democrats, for which they were condemned to hard labor, but which in reality was a conspiracy of the police against the fraction. Here again the contemporary party press would be indispensable. The author should also have used the memoirs of some of the former members of the political police published in French, such as those of generals Gerasimov and Spiridonovich.

I realize that many of those gaps were unavoidable in view of the pioneer character of Mr. Levin's undertaking and the conditions under which he had to do his research. The same circumstance probably explains some of the factual mistakes met with mostly in those parts of the book in the preparation of which the author could not use adequate source material. Thus the *Iskra* was not founded by Plekhanov and Lenin (p.38); Lenin was not supported by the majority of the *Iskra* staff at the Second Party Congress; the First Party Congress met in 1898 and not in

1899; Lenin had no relation whatsoever to the formation of the so-called Second St. Petersburg Soviet of Workers Deputies (pp. 41-42), etc.

All these defects and errors, however, by no means detract from the interest of the book in its central part, and I can recommend it to anyone who is interested in modern Russian history and in the history of the Russian Socialist movement in particular.

BORIS I. NICOLAEVSKY  
New York City

ROCHESTER, ANNA. *Lenin on the Agrarian Question*. New York, International Publishers, 1942, 224 pp. \$2.50.

Not a critical, scientific study but a partisan tract, this is ably written from its own standpoint. Its principal value consists in copious excerpts from Lenin's writings, through which, despite the fact that they are not always felicitously translated, the man can speak for himself. And in the course of thirty years of active political life, Lenin had much to say about so crucial an issue in Russian politics and economics as the agrarian question, the study of which he made something of a specialty.

Impressions and reactions that these excerpts will produce will no doubt vary from reader to reader. Not without truth was it said of Lenin's writings that they resemble the Bible because one can find supporting quotations that apply to every conceivable situation and taste. What, however, has always intrigued the present reviewer on reading or rereading Lenin is his attitude toward the Russian peasant.

Of course, Lenin cannot be accused of any undue tenderness toward the small peasant farmer. He accepted and taught all the dogmas of orthodox Marxism that spelled the eventual doom of the peasant producer. He consistently fought the earlier agrarian current of Russian socialism, the Narodniki or Populists who pinned their hopes on the egalitarianism of the peasant mir. And yet appeasement of the peasant as a "petit bourgeois" invariably held a high place in Lenin's political program.

In the early years of the century it was the "otrezki"—the demand voiced by Lenin and, on his initiative, by the then still united Russian Social Democratic party for the restoration of the land that was lost by the peasants to the landlords when the former were liberated from serfdom in the middle of the nineteenth century—a loss that they always strongly resented. When a few years later the much more radical nature of the land demands of the peasants was revealed during the Revolution of 1905, it did not take Lenin long to discard the more modest agrarian program and support confiscation of estate lands. "Our mistake in setting forth the demand for return of the 'otrezki,'" wrote Lenin, "consisted in underestimation of the breadth and the depth of the democratic, really bourgeois-democratic movement among the peasantry. It is stupid to persist in this mistake now when the revolution has taught us much."

Lenin made it clear, however, that in his opinion such a democratic peasant revolution was a transitional phenomenon. It would not only fail to arrest the development of capitalism in agriculture

with all its inevitable "contradictions" but actually foster it, leading eventually according to the familiar Marxist logic to a socialist revolution. In the meantime capitalist development would be on what Lenin called the American pattern of relatively small individual farming rather than that of the Prussian type of Junker large estate. Of his strong preference for the former as the less painful course for the peasant masses, Lenin left no doubt. He even acknowledged a germ of truth in the Narodniki position. "The dialectics of history is such that as an anti-capitalist remedy the Populists and Trudoviks offer and promote the most logically and decisively capitalist measure in relation to the agrarian question in Russia. 'Equality' of a new distribution of lands is a utopia, but a complete break with the whole old landownership — landlord, imperial, and 'crown' — is essential for a new distribution. This break is the most necessary, the most economically progressive (especially for such a state as Russia), the most pressing measure in a bourgeois-democratic direction. . . . False in a formally economic sense, the Narodnik (Populist) democratism is true in a historic sense; false, as a socialist utopia, this democratism is true in that particular historically-conditioned democratic struggle of the peasant masses which constitutes an inseparable element of the bourgeois transformation and a condition for its complete victory."

In the light of his earlier writings, the compromises and deviations from the strict Marxist path, which Lenin made in Soviet agrarian policy, seem less surprising.

This applies to his embracing the populist program in the celebrated land decree of November, 1917, which gave the peasants the go signal for division of estates and insured their good will or tolerance towards the new Bolshevik régime. The same holds true of the adoption of the N.E.P. in 1921 with its wager on the small peasant farmer, which was dictated in the first instance by economic necessity.

Even in 1919 during the period of War Communism that preceded the N.E.P. and which Lenin called "the real proletarian revolution in the village" (though later he admitted that it was premature and forced by famine and civil war), he cautioned against coercion of the middle peasant. More than that, even the Kulaki, the rich peasants, were not to be entirely expropriated but the resistance and "counter-revolutionary tendencies" merely suppressed, as he put it in a speech at the Eighth Party Congress on March 23, 1919.

Some would explain this attitude of Lenin toward the peasant, which runs like a red thread through his voluminous writings as sheer opportunism. There is no doubt that Lenin combined a doctrinaire rigidity in his ideological outlook with a considerable flexibility of tactics and a readiness to compromise. He well understood the difficulties of Marxian socialism in dealing with the small farmer — this Achilles' heel which must be handled gingerly, especially in pre-revolutionary Russia with its complications of the peasant-landlord conflict and the peasant *mir* to which even Marx gave his blessing. But I wonder whether some credit should not also be given to the contagious effect of

the peasantophile tradition of the Russian intelligentsia from which even Lenin could not escape untouched.

LAZAR VOLIN

Washington, D. C.

ISWOLSKY, HELEN. *Light Before Dusk: A Russian Catholic in France*. New York, Longmans, Green, 1942. 253 pp. \$2.50.

In these terrible days of ordeal, the attitude of the Roman-Catholic Church gives comfort and hope to many, and not to Christians alone. Despite all the short-comings of national churches in Spain, Italy, and elsewhere, both Rome and the Catholic intelligentsia stand courageously for justice, freedom, and Christian humanism. This association of Papacy and the modern spiritual and social trends is a new and rather unexpected development, which bears witness to a true revival within the Roman Church. France stands, or perhaps, one must say stood, in the front line of this movement as is shown by her rich and often brilliant literature.

Helen Iswolsky gives us an invaluable opportunity of looking at this French Catholic revival from within. For about two decades she lived and worked among the Catholic progressive circles—the Dominicans, the disciples of Jacques Maritain, the friends of "Esprit" and "Temps Présent." Now, having escaped the German invasion, she sends a warm farewell to the half-submerged land so dear to her. Her book is neither a historical sketch nor a collection of materials, rather it is a spiritual autobiography, although the modesty of the author makes her reluctant to speak much

of herself. She tells of her spiritual pilgrimage more by describing the men and the "atmospheres" which helped and inspired her.

One circumstance in particular enhances the value of this book for readers interested in Russian culture. The daughter of a Russian Ambassador and Minister of Foreign affairs, Miss Iswolsky joined the Roman-Catholic Church of the Eastern rite. She retained her Russian national feelings and even her sympathy for the Eastern Orthodox religious mind, and felt her mission to be an intermediary between the two spiritual worlds. Berdyaev is her teacher and friend, perhaps, in the same measure as Maritain. And the chapters that she devotes to the "house in Clamart" (Berdyaev's circle) and to "my orthodox friends" belong to the most engrossing in her book.

It is only natural that now, in exile, this spiritual world of France, so rich and fruitful, appears to its former citizen as a paradise lost. This accounts partially for the optimistic attitude that prevails throughout the book and is especially noticeable in the Russian chapters. Here the author obviously feels the obligation to refrain from touching on any sore points. No mention is made at all of the unceasing struggle between the Orthodox and the Catholics, nor of the tragic isolation in which the progressive Orthodox thinkers and social leaders are living. This tends to lessen the militant virtues of N. Berdyaev and Mother Mary Skobtsov. Incidentally, Berdyaev is not a professor at the Paris Divinity School, as he is referred to throughout the book and as he is generally believed to be in Amer-

ica. This fact, however, completely changes Berdyaev's position in the Orthodox world, emphasizing his heroic "loneliness," of which Mr. J. Maritain so rightly speaks in his preface.

I would not wish my few critical remarks to obscure my real impression of Helen Iswolsky's book—I think highly of it. I cannot, however, abstain from expressing my disagreement with her in regard to Vladimir Soloviev, our common teacher. It seems to me that to speak of Soloviev's "conversion" to the Roman Church is to oversimplify his extremely involved theological position. Miss Iswolsky is, perhaps, in possession of some documents which are unknown to most of the Russian scholars. Yet, until a new critical investigation of the whole Soloviev "case" shows differently, we are justified in believing that when joining the Roman Church Soloviev did not wish to abandon the Orthodox Church. In his opinion the Church of Christ was undivided, despite historical schisms, and he felt it to be his right to partake of Holy Communion in both Churches. Of course, canonical obstacles prevented him from carrying out his intention. His whole position was quite unique—perhaps prophetic—and its definition as "conversion" is not fair to him.

G. FEDOTOV

New Haven, Conn.

*New Directions Anthology in Prose and Poetry 1941.* New Directions, Norfolk, Conn., 1941. 729 pp. \$3.50.

Fully a third of the 1941 volume of *New Directions Anthology* is devoted to Soviet Russia. The

theine of Communism, moreover, spills over into the non-Russian section and echoes through a ten-page piece of prose entitled "Episodes in a Long Life," by H. J. Kaplan and a political poem, "The Communist," by John Berryman. The most interesting in the Russian section is a trenchant satire by a Chicagoan, Georg Mann, called "Azeff Wischmeier, the Bolshevik Bureaucrat," which in sheer literary lustiness and insight into Soviet ways is in no wise inferior to the best of the earlier Ehrenburg, the *Little Golden Calf* of Ilf and Petrov, and some of the slyer tales of Zoshchenko. This story of the career of a Bolshevik Fouché, brilliantly written, has the devastating realism and essential truthfulness of the rollicking burlesque at its best.

A most welcome and timely contribution is the bulky section on Soviet Russian Poetry. While the wisdom of selections and the arrangement of the material may be questioned, and the translations are not always adequate, yet the participants of this virtually pioneering effort deserve the most generous encouragement.

By far the best work in this group is Vladimir Nabokov's translation of Vladislav Hodassevich's three poems, "The Monkey," "Orpheus," and the one beginning with the line "What is the use of time and rhyme?" — perhaps the most difficult of the lot to render into English, because in the original Russian the form and content are indissolubly fused. It should be borne in mind that Hodassevich, an emigré since 1922, may be regarded as a Soviet poet only because of his influence on some of the

younger versifiers and not because of the character of his poetry.

The arrangement of the Soviet poetry section is not a happy one. Babette Deutch's translations of Pasternak and Tikhonov, most satisfactory poetically if not too faithful to the original, are for some unaccountable reason tacked on at the end, by way of an appendix, when even for chronological reasons they should have been placed earlier. Indeed, it would have been more logical to begin with the essay by Leonid Znakomy and Dan Levin, work Miss Sandomersky's interesting notes into it, follow it up with Professor Kaun's essay on folk trends, and then arrange the translations by poets rather than by translators, bearing in mind chronology and schools. Such an arrangement would tell the story of the evolution of poetic forms in Soviet Russia, beginning with Hodassevich and Pasternak, continuing with Mayakovsky and Asseyev, followed perhaps by Tikhonov, then by Selvinsky, then by some of the minor figures like, say, Svetlov, then by such a leading poet as Bagritsky. As it is now arranged the entire section is a hodge-podge.

It is also unfortunate that here and there the translators distorted certain nuances by mistranslations or omissions. As an illustration, let us consider Miss Sandomersky's version of that very gifted and significant poet, Eduard Bagritsky, who, although a guerrilla fighter and a Red Army soldier during the Civil War, did not publish a line about that great historic event, writing instead about tramps and wanderers in a most admiring and romantic vein. In the translation of his poem "Smugglers," for in-

stance, it would have been more faithful to the original and better poetry had the translator given us "Gun tight in my fist" instead of the rather grating and unspecific "With a gun in the fist." Worse and more numerous are the translator's offenses in Bagritsky's "Origin"—a bitter, horrifying rejection of the poet's antecedents, significantly reminiscent of Karl Marx's scurrilous essay on the Jews, in which the poet rejects the grubby world of the desperate and grasping poor and flees from reality into anarchistic romanticism. For ex-

ample, "And forth my childhood went" should have been, "my childhood passed away"—after all, there is a difference in meaning between "went forth" and "passed away." And why was the translator satisfied with "This Jewish unbelief of mine," when Bagritsky sang of his "Jewish disbelief" in "the Sabbath in its purple wig"? But lest I seem ungallant and unfair, let me add that in many respects Miss Sandmersky's translations are among the best in this volume.

CHARLES MALAMUTH  
Cornell University

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